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ABSTRACT

The Miscellaneous Studies Division of these Proceedings contains the following 13 papers: "A Trend, Imagined or Real? A Comparative Study of Development Journalism and Public Journalism" (Jiafei Yin); "Investigative Reporting about Minorities in America" (Tim Gallimore and Lillian Dunlap); "A Defining Moment: Who Says What about Public Journalism" (Sally McMillan and others); "Stamping the Documents: The Rise of the Security Classification System" (David H. Morrissey); "GLAAD to Be Gay: A Survey of the Media Activist Strategies of the Gay and Lesbian Alliance against Defamation" (Jack Banks); "Do Vivid and Pallid News Portrayals of Political Expression Influence Political Tolerance?" (Catherine A. Steele and others); "The Impact of Political Efficacy and Media Use on Political Participation during the 1992 Presidential Election Campaign" (Huiping A. Huang); "Market Segmentation: How Does a U.S. Company Segment in Overseas Markets?" (Lalida Silpacharn); "Assessing Diversity in Broadcast Syndication" (Philip M. Napoli); "Crime and Agenda-Setting, 1988-1995" The Relationships among the President, the Press, and the Public" (Patrick M. Jablonski and William J. Gonzenbach); "Newspaper Ownership and Publisher Autonomy: A Ranking of the Chains" (Martha N. Matthews); "Beyond the Principle of Relative Constancy: Determinants of Consumer Mass Media Expenditures in Belgium" (Michel Dupagne); and "The Business of Newspaper Companies: Are Newspapers Part of That Future?" (Karen Cristiano). Individual papers contain references. (NKA)

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A Trend, Imagined or Real?

— A Comparative Study of Development Journalism and Public Journalism

Jiafei Yin, Ph.D Candidate

The School of Journalism, University of Missouri-Columbia

Mailing address: 8G University Terrace, Columbia, MO 65201
Phone number: 573-884-3725
E-mail address: c438242@MIZZOU1.Missouri.edu

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August 1996

A Trend, Imagined or Real?

— A Comparative Study of Development Journalism and Public Journalism

Abstract: *This paper is attempting to identify an emerging trend away from the traditional/conventional journalism by comparing the directions, characteristics and practices of development journalism with public/civic journalism. By comparing the similarities of the two, an emerging journalistic trend toward activist journalism, involved journalism, and journalism for predetermined ends appears. The trend is in direct contrast to conventional journalistic values, such as detachment, "covering the parade instead of leading the parade". Differences are also studied for the two to complement each other.*

I. Introduction: The Impossible Comparison

Most people would agree that the conventional definition of journalism is the reporting of news though there is much debate and controversy over how the reporting should be done and what is news. This paper is focusing on the two types of journalism that go beyond conventional journalism, that do more than just tell the news. They are development journalism practiced mostly in developing countries and civic journalism or public journalism, which is currently being experimented in North America. This paper attempts to compare and contrast the two both in theory and in practice.

Some media scholars or researchers might be shocked at the very idea of putting the two concepts next to each other and comparing them. After all, development journalism and civic journalism come out of totally different media systems and against different socio-economic backgrounds. Also to some Western libertarian media scholars and theorists like Robert Stevenson (1988:143) and Leonard R. Sussman (1978:76), development journalism necessarily means state control of mass media under the pretext of national development. They claim that efforts to make development journalism work have already failed. Civic journalism, on the other hand, has come out of a free press system and stresses the need to "reconnect" with the readers and communities. And the experiments in civic journalism have just started and are still spreading.

Other media researchers like Majid Tehranian (1980) claim that the debate over development journalism has hit a theoretical and political impasse whereas the debate about the legitimacy of civic journalism is yet to reach its climax.

Even less extreme Western media scholars would think that, given the vastly different social contexts, historical periods which give rise to the two forms of journalism, the different techniques, the different goals, and the fact that development journalism is practiced in developing countries while civic journalism is practiced in America, there is little common ground for comparison.

Despite the claims by some media scholars, the reality today is that development journalism is still being practiced in many developing countries in varied forms and the debate about development journalism is still very much alive. Media scholars from developing countries such as the Philippines and India still continue to pour out data about the practice of development journalism in their respective countries. And in most academic discussions about international communications today, development journalism is still a legitimate topic. Some media scholars are trying to work out alternative models to development journalism. Hemant Shah's normative model of "emancipatory journalism" is an attempt in this direction (Shah, 1995). Even William A. Hachten sees "the developmental concept" as "an emerging pattern" associated with the new nations of the Third World even though he perceives the concept as "only a temporary and transitional condition" (Hachten, 1992).

Acknowledging the seeming or apparent incompatibilities of development journalism and civic journalism, the author is still convinced that such a comparison is not only possible, but, helpful, at least heuristically for the healthy development of both.

II. A Common Trend: Away from Conventional Journalism

The concept of development journalism started in Asia in 1960s (Shafter, 1987). According to Encanto, (Atwood, 1982:33-52) it was not until the late 1960s that the phrase "development journalism" was first used. Development journalism, put simply, is journalism for national development.

During the 1960s, in Asia, a group of journalists began to promote the concept of "development" journalism -- in a bid to reach rural areas with information which was relevant, clear and competent; and to steer journalism towards informed discussion of the economic and social problem central to developing countries' situations. (Righter, 1978:188-189)

From the above description we can see that development journalism arose from dissatisfaction with conventional journalism. Development journalists believe that conventional journalism is ineffective in helping nations, especially rural areas, develop. They are convinced that conventional journalism is not reaching the rural areas with "relevant" and "clear" information. The background of development journalism clearly demonstrates that unlike conventional journalism which only aims at reporting the news, development journalism has a mission to fulfill.

The call from Third World countries for a New World Information and Communication Order, which reached its height in 1970s, gave further impetus to the promotion of development journalism. Some media scholars such as Lent (Casmir, 1978:679) even think that the New Order has given rise to the "development communication" movement. The call for the New Order is the result of serious criticism by the Third World countries of Western conventional journalism, especially international news by wire services, which focus on spot news, negative events while providing little information relevant and helpful to the national development of Third World countries. The Third World countries also contend that unbalanced flow of information from developed to developing countries impose the former's values, beliefs, lifestyles and attitudes on the latter, labeled as "cultural imperialism". To redress this negative news and spot news bias and the unbalanced information flow, Third World countries promote the New Order and development journalism, which aims to report more news about the development process.

To sum up, development journalism is a step away from conventional journalism and a criticism of the Western journalistic practices, especially its negative bias in selecting news. It also goes beyond reporting the news. It aims to promote national development.

The rise of the civic journalism movement has a much different social and historical context. However, the reason and rationale behind its rise are very similar to those of development journalism. Civic journalists are not satisfied with conventional journalism either, which focuses on negative events and leaves the public apathetic. They want to provide information relevant and helpful to their readers. They want to activate their readers to deliberate effectively about their community and social problems and do something about them rather than just report those problems. They depart from conventional journalistic practices by deciding to get involved in the communities they cover. They want to make a difference.

The civic journalism movement comes about against a background of "declining readership", "loss of autonomy" on the part of the working journalists, "public disgust with the media", the perceived "disintegration of community life", and "the increasingly disillusioned environment in the newsrooms" (Rosen, Review and Criticism, Dec. 1994:373). This apparently gloomy situation makes many newspaper editors and publishers worry about the state of journalism. "And many are gravitating toward the hottest secular religion in the news business, public journalism" (Shepard, American Journalism Review, Sept. 1994:29).

The origin and the activist nature of the two divergent journalistic movements clearly show a similar trend away from the traditional/conventionaljournalism, away from its negative bias, and away from its emphasis on spot news, and away from just being an objective chronicler. These similarities point to the common philosophical ground of the two journalistic movements -- media responsibility, or activist role of the media, to be exact.

1. Beyond Telling the News

After more than 20 years of discussions and debate, an authoritative definition of development journalism remains elusive. The rich body of literature on the topic provides varied definitions, emphasizing respectively its importance, goals, characteristics, role, etc.

Rogers' definition is like this: "Development communication is the application of communication with the goal for furthering socioeconomic development. Thus development communication is a type of planned social change, oftentimes of major concern in the Third World nations of Latin America, Africa, and Asia (Asante, 1989: 67).

Nora Quebral, considered one of the originators of the movement, defines development communication as: "The art and science of human communication applied to the speedy transformation of a country and the mass of its people from poverty to a dynamic state of economic growth that makes possible greater social equality and the larger fulfillment of the human potential" (Quebral, op. cit.:25).

Vital (1985) says development journalism is a form of mass communication which intends to promote human development by imparting ideas, cultivating attitudes and teaching the skills a developing country needs.

Jamais gives three main ideas defining development journalism's evolving philosophy. It is purposive communication, it is value-laden, and it is pragmatic (Jamais, 1975:13).

The importance of development journalism lies in its utility as a "vehicle" to spread information and knowledge widely and quickly through the news media, thereby facilitating the process of development (Wete, 1986:6).

Public or civic journalism has a much shorter history and is still in its initial and experimental stage. Therefore, its definition is still in the making as Levine (1995) suggests that public journalism is a movement with a recognizable character that eludes easy definition. He says many participants seemed to feel a need to define their movement, if only so that they could introduce it to the outside world. Yet the definitions that they offered were both vague and various." He gives various definitions attempted by other public journalism scholars -- "Public journalism is about finding out what's really important to our readers" and " creating dialogue"; public journalism would mean investigating the "root causes" of crime, instead of merely "covering the mayhem"; it is "re-engineering the relationship between communities and newspapers"; and "taking the newsroom to the community"; the role of public journalists was "to promote a healthy public life."

Shepard (1994:29) summarizes the goal of public journalism as to "reconnect" citizens with their newspapers, their communities and the political process, with newspapers playing a role not unlike that of a community organizer. "According to the gospel of public journalism, professional passivity, is passé; activism is hot. Detachment is out; participation is in. Experts are no longer the quote-machines of choice; readers' voices must be heard."

Talking about public journalism, Merritt (1995:xi) says the needed change is not easy. It is not about journalists doing a few things differently, or doing a few different things. It is fundamental, the adoption of a role beyond telling the news.

Following Merritt's idea "telling the news is not enough", Rosen(1994:3) defines the role of public journalism as "improving the community's capacity to act on the news, of caring for the quality of public dialogue, of helping people engage in a search for solutions, of showing the community how to grapple with -- and not only read about -- its problems." He defines the goal of public journalism as such "journalism can and should play a part in strengthening citizenship, improving public debate and reviving public life."

The above attempted definitions of the role and the goal of development journalism and public journalism clearly betray their commonalities. Both aim at change. Both attempt to get things happened rather than merely record what has happened. Both set out to use journalism for predetermined ends, one for national development while the other for keeping public life and democracy alive. The differences in goal have more to do with the different stages of social and economic development rather than differences in journalistic philosophy. Both go beyond the objective of telling the news.

Rather than just covering what has happened, development and civic journalists act as catalysts for things to happen. It is no longer enough to get people informed. To get people involved and act on information has become the goal. Reporting the news becomes a tool, rather than an end in itself. Therefore, journalists set out to promote, mobilize, activate the public for action, one for participation in national development and the other for participation in public life. Both set out to raise the consciousness of the people, to re-orient people toward common societal or community goals. Thus, journalists become organizers, mobilizers, and players rather than merely observers. Tired of negativism and passivism, journalists opt for activism.

To achieve the objectives of development journalism and civic journalism, new ways of practicing journalism have to be invented and new values of news have to be defined.

2. Toward Process News

The definitions and objectives of development journalism and civic journalism determine that they value a type of news that is different from the traditional spot news, or hard news. Rather than highlighting spot news or events, both development and civic journalists spend more time and efforts on covering process news. The concept of process news is raised in contrast to break news or spot news. Process news is news about a process. It stresses the coverage of the development or progress of events, rather than the events themselves. Process news is in-depth news coverage of what is going on over an extended period of time. This new stress on process is only natural because both national development and community revitalization and reintegration are processes. To cover a process, journalists have to collect information over more extended period of time and do more research. They are engaged in enterprise journalism.

In his dissertation, Wete (1986:73) says the crusading nature of development journalism suggests a definition of news value that focuses on the process of news rather than on events of an unusual nature. Wete says (p.65) the purpose of development journalism is for the mass communication media to give development news preference over other types of news, such as crime, sex, or violence.

Aggarwala (Intermedia, 1980,I:26) defines development journalism as "the reporting of development process rather than events."

In practicing development journalism, various aspects of development can become new beats for news coverage.

To do a good job, development journalists have to expand their horizon. They have to understand the development process, provide information or knowledge helpful to the development, and look at the process critically and find out the problems. They have to raise the consciousness of the people about national development and mobilize people to participate in the development process.

Similarly, the very nature of civic journalism demands that journalists shift their attention toward the communities and public life. According to Rosen (1994:4), civic journalists are after "whole journalism". A whole journalism would not stop at exposing ills and ailments; it would also focus on creating a healthy public climate. A whole journalism would not equate politics with "government" and its misdeeds; it would see public problem-solving as the best definition of the political sphere, and it would ask how this sphere could be made to work better.

Instead of focusing on events, civic journalists talk with the people in the communities, find out their concerns and report them. They invite or even force politicians to address these concerns if necessary. Civic journalists are promoters of a healthy community life. They mobilize people in a community to participate in solving their own problems. Crime or violence still catches the attention of civic journalists. But the objective of civic journalism is not just to expose crime or violence. It is to engage the public to deal with them. The news value does not lie in the crime news itself, but in the community efforts at fighting it.

Development journalism and civic journalism place high demands on journalists. Besides traditional journalistic training, they have to expand their knowledge base to be competent and well-informed enough to cover the complicated processes of national development or of community reintegration. Development journalists have to understand highly complex economic, technical, scientific, and sociological information and translate and interpret it to their generally lay audiences. Journalists doing civic journalism have to quickly master the gist of what is going on at resource panels and try to become experts themselves. With topics as complex as health care and religion, journalists should be able to understand complicated issues quickly and transmit them to readers.

To some readers, development news or community news may not be as interesting or exciting as break news or spot news. Extra effort and talent are needed to make development news and civic journalism both relevant to the people and interesting to the readers. Further studies are needed on how to achieve this goal.

Development journalism and civic journalism are enterprise journalism, which costs more time and efforts. There is great diversity in how development journalism and civic journalism are practiced. Development journalism practices vary from country to country and civic journalism practices differ from project to project. There is no established or authoritative way of doing them, unlike traditional journalism practices, which have been theorized and compiled in journalism school curriculums. This leaves plenty of room for exercising journalists' creativity.

3. Controversial Theory and Practice

As development journalism and civic journalism have departed from traditional journalism, both have become rather controversial theory and practice in the field of mass media research and encountered serious criticism. Conventional journalism is often bombarded with criticism too, but most criticisms are only directed at specific practices rather than its basic philosophical ground, which is only questioned now by development journalism and civic journalism.

The most serious criticism of development journalism are from libertarian media scholars upholding the principle of media freedom. They accuse development journalism as a pretext for governments to take control of the media. Some media scholars like Stevenson (1988) and Sussman (1978) declared development journalism as a failed project, and concluded from a few case studies that development journalism was a "tool used by authoritarian regimes bent on the denial of free speech and the repression or distortion of information" (Murphy, 1993, p.2).

Other media scholars like Merrill are not convinced that there is any empirical support for development journalism. Merrill contends that "I have always considered media systems mainly as reflectors of a nation's progress, freedom, sophistication and modernization -- and not as determinants. But I do not have any more evidence to back up this notion than do those who are convinced that the media are change agents. I see the whole question as correlational or relational. Many social scientists believe, and I concur, the causal proof cannot be obtained in complex social situations. (Merrill, 1974:53).

Hemant Shah (1995) criticizes development journalism as a top-down model of communication without reader input. He says that the model assumes that people in the Third World are passive and must be aroused and motivated to act in their own best interests. Shah also criticizes development journalism for blindly accepting the concept of "modernization", which, he contends, does more harm than good to Third World countries.

Government control of the media is a big problem in many developing countries, where development journalism is mostly practiced. However, the degree of control varies from country to country. Journalists practicing alternative ways of development journalism are struggling to stay free of government control and some definitions of development journalism stress the need to be independent.

For civic journalism, the activist role of journalists bears the brunt of criticism because some doubters are uneasy. It is also being criticized for being influenced by the business side of the media because of its concern over declining circulation and by local power structures because civic journalists are working closely with the communities. The power of the media in changing reality has caused some concerns, too.

The doubters fear the movement poses a threat to traditional journalistic values. To them civic journalism has crossed the sacred line of detachment. Journalists are supposed to report news as objectively as possible. Even though they cannot obtain absolute objectivity, they should at least try to achieve neutrality in their reporting. For a neutral stand and unbiased observation, they are supposed to remain detached to the events they are covering. Actually, some newspapers have rules regarding what community, political or business activities staff can and cannot get involved in, depending on what beat they cover.

Skeptics worry that public journalists will get too deeply involved in that process to remain balanced in their reporting. Newsday's Schneider believes that once a newspaper begins to lead the parade rather than cover it, its credibility is in danger. In his view, newspapers should spotlight a problem, solicit reader feedback and aggressively follow the story until it is resolved (Shepard, 1994:33). Marvin Kalb has similar concerns: "A journalist who becomes an actor, in my view, is overstepping the bounds of his traditional responsibility. When the journalist literally organizes the change and then covers it, I am uncertain about such traditional qualities as detachment, objectivity, toughness.... The whole point of American journalism has always been detachment from authority so that critical analysis is possible" (Shepard, 1994:33).

Leonard Downie Jr., executive editor of the Washington Post also said: "No matter how strongly I feel about something that's going on out there, my job is not to try to influence the outcome. I just don't want to cross that line, no matter how well-meaning the reasoning might be for crossing it." (Shepard, 1994:30)

Other media scholars, conscious of media's enormous power, fear that the media may abuse that power. They argue that journalists should be neutral, detached describers of the world as they find it; they should never attempt to change society in keeping with their values. Some critics believe that the press has no right to be politically engaged, because an activist press could alter public life almost at will -- and without democratic accountability (Levine, 1995:12).

Some media critics point out that by intervening in the events they cover, journalists change the reality. These critics are talking about public journalism projects such as the two conducted by the Wichita Eagle. One project was called "Your Vote Counts" and the other "The People Project: Solving It Ourselves". For both projects the paper made citizens meet and talk about their concerns in intensive focus groups or "agenda-less" meetings. Critics say that convening a citizens' panel distorts reality by presenting a picture of public deliberation when in reality people rarely meet in diverse groups to talk about politics. They say when The Wichita Eagle describes "folks in the middle" getting together to hash out their problems, this looks to many hardened political reporters like an obvious falsification of the grim reality (Levine, 1995:16).

Given the characteristics of civic journalism which value input from the readers, some media critics ask: If readers are dictating what a paper should write, aren't journalists abrogating their responsibility? Shouldn't reporters be community chroniclers rather than boosters?

To answer these criticisms, Merritt says: traditional journalists, are risk averse. They have to learn to take some risks. And with the state of journalism today, particularly newspapers and television, there's little to risk, basically, in terms of credibility or anything else (Dykers, 1995:1).

4. Theoretical Status in Balance

After twenty years in practice and debate, development journalism has not yet found its assured theoretical status. Ogan describes development journalism in the context of a new theory of the press (op. cit.:10), and argues that it does not quite fit into any of the "four theories of the press".

"Some have described development journalism in the context of a new theory -- a fifth theory of the press, maintaining that the position of developing countries is such that journalists have never experienced quite the same relationship with their societies before. In describing the four theories of the press, Sibert, et al take as their thesis `the press has always taken on the form and coloration of the social and political structures within which it operates.' The question of development journalism is whether this is a new form or forms or just a variation on the traditional four theories" (Ogan, 1982:8-9).

To Guneratne (1980), developmental journalism is compatible with the social responsibility theory of a free and responsible press. It is incompatible either with the libertarian theory of a completely free press or with the authoritarian or Communist theory of a press controlled by the government. Guneratne attempts to establish that media subservience to government is not a prerequisite for fostering development journalism. He says: "...the libertarian concept of the press, which defines the function of the mass media as providing information and entertainment, does not fit the concept of developmental journalism; the authoritarian and communist theories of the press are compatible with developmental journalism but with non-democratic limitations; and the social responsibility theory provides the most fertile ground for reaping the full potential of developmental journalism in keeping with the democratic political philosophy as well as the new thinking on bottom-up development and self reliance...."

Hachten (1992) lists five press concepts: 1) Authoritarian, 2) Western, 3) Communist, 4) Revolutionary, and 5) Developmental. He defines the Revolutionary concept as "a concept of illegal and subversive communication utilizing the press and broadcasting to overthrow a government or wrest control from alien or otherwise rejected rulers". He regards the Developmental concept as a logical consequence of the Revolutionary concept as the former is used to "consolidate the gains" of the latter. He sees the Developmental concept as "a variation on the Authoritarian" concept (Hachten, 1992).

But many media scholars feel that development journalism is still a relatively new concept, both as a form of journalistic reporting and as a field of communication research. Thus, it suffers from the lack of theoretical framework and empirical data (Wete, 1986:19).

Roger (Asante, 1989:74) says: "It is surprising that no major textbook on development communication has appeared to replace the 1964 Schramm volume.... Perhaps the fast-moving and incoherent nature of the development communication field has prevented such a consensus document from being written. There are many useful books about development communication, however, and a large and growing number of journal articles and research reports, but the textbook that defines the field does not exist today."

In his meta-research summing up 20 studies about development journalism, Fair (1988) says: "The descriptive nature of nearly all of the studies may have served to fragment the ways in which the studies were organized and carried out. Without a primary theoretical framework to guide research, studies tended to examine descriptively many different facts of development journalism. Generally, studies done on development journalism do not cite each other and do not seem to build one another. The result of this research fragmentation may point to a lack of maturity in the study of development journalism, whereby studies do not fit coherently into a larger body of research."

Shafer (1987:18) believes that since development communication remains at an early stage in its evolution as a press theory, it has yet to be determined if it can function as an effective model when attached to a private or other press system which is relatively free of government restraint, censorship or other forms of interference.

The debate on the theoretical status of civic journalism is just emerging. It is still too early to predict if it belongs to the Social Responsibility theory, or a variant of the theory, or some totally new press theory. The direction of the debate is far from definite as its definition is still taking its shape and the movement itself still expanding. Rosen (1994:1) describes public journalism as an "experimental movement". "It's a bunch of people who don't know exactly what they're doing saying, 'what if...' or 'suppose we...'

Shepard (1994:29) says the nascent movement is still defining itself. That makes it hard to pin down precisely what it is and harder to convert those who treasure the traditional approach to journalism.

However, one thing is certain -- the direction and outcome of the debate will very much depend on the performance of the ongoing public journalism movement.

Authoritarian, Libertarian and Communist theories of the press have a much longer history of development. Even social responsibility theory is still debatable today to some media scholars. It is premature to say that development journalism has failed. Even if Third World news pools did not function as effectively as expected, alternative ways of development journalism is still being practiced in individual developing countries. For public journalism, it still has to test itself to see if it is operating according to a coherent press theory and where that theory stands in relation to other press theories.

Broadly speaking, I believe both development journalism and public journalism belong to the social responsibility theory of the press as both consciously choose to do some good for the society and neither needs state or authority control of the press as a prerequisite to function. If Hutchins Commission's report brought about the establishment of the social responsibility theory, we can clearly see that development and civic journalists choose to undertake greater social responsibilities than the five requirements defined by the Hutchins Commission: 1) to provide a truthful, comprehensive account of the day's events in a context which gives them meaning; 2) to provide a forum for exchange of comment and criticism; 3) to provide a representative picture of the constituent groups of society; 4) to present and clarify the goals and values of society; 5) to provide full access to the day's intelligence.

Development and civic journalists pay much attention to the first requirement by emphasizing the provision of relevant information, which will give audience meaning.

Civic journalists are making extra efforts at providing a forum for exchange of comment and criticism, and providing a representative picture of each constituent group. Development journalists put special emphasis on presenting and clarifying the goals and values of society. Civic journalists are making efforts in that direction too. Full access to the day's intelligence is the ideal for both development and civic journalists as both emphasize the educational role of the media. Besides trying to fulfill the five requirements, development and civic journalists want to bring about changes, changing for the better of the society.

III. Synthesis: Making Use of Differences

1. Press-Government Relations: Partners vs. Challengers

In the developing countries where development journalism is practiced, governments and journalists regard each other mostly as partners in national development. The governments draft development plans, projects and set development objectives. The journalists publicize and interpret the meaning and benefits of these plans and projects, and mobilize the people to participate in these projects. Although journalists also check the implementation of these plans and critically examine the role of the government in implementing these plans, journalists generally accept the legitimacy of these plans instead of challenging them.

The Third World governments, on the other hand, need the media to guide and educate the public along the lines of government plans. For the cooperation of the media, some governments try to be nice to the media, some coax the media, others coerce or even punish the media in order to obtain cooperation. To carry out their policies and plans, Third

World governments want cooperative rather than adversarial media. Governments generally sponsor and support media's efforts at diffusion of technical information.

At this writing, civic journalism, however, is operating in a different context. Journalists mostly work in small, medium-sized communities and only a few metropolitan areas are involved in civic journalism. They listen to the people, find out their concerns and motivate people to solve their own problems. If the problems are of such a nature as exceeding the capacity of the communities to resolve by themselves, journalists act as their spokesmen by directing these problems to the attention of the government or politicians. They demand or even force the politicians to address the concerns of the people. Journalists report more from the perspectives of the communities than those of the government. Their job is to confront the government or politicians with people's concerns rather than explaining government policies to the people. They are more of challengers to the government than partners with the government.

Development journalism will become a lot healthier if journalists are more critical of government plans and the implementations of these plans. With a more challenging attitude, problems in the development process can be identified timely and bureaucracy and waste can be minimized. Also with less dependence on government sources, news coverage can be more balanced. A more critical attitude can also make development journalism more authentic. On the other hand, if civic journalists can obtain more co-operation from the government, either state or local, problems in the communities might be able to be solved more easily. After all governments are supposed to be created to serve the people and they have the information and resources to do so.

2. Orientations: Economic vs. Social

From the origin of development journalism we can see that the primary goal of this form of journalism is fast economic development, especially in rural areas. The diffusion of technical and relevant science information can help farmers raise their productivity, and therefore, their living standards. Practiced nationwide, development journalism is concerned with national economic development and the state development plans.

The call for the New World Information and Communication Order, which pushed development journalism to a new high, came out of the call for a New World Economic Order. The concern with unbalanced flow of information across national borders is caused by the frustration that such unbalanced flow hampers developing countries' efforts at national development, a big part of which is economic development.

As we have discussed earlier, development journalism is mostly practiced in Third World countries, which are generally underdeveloped economically. Poverty is often regarded as the root cause of many social problems. Without adequate financial resources, these nations have their hands tied at solving their own problems. Thus, economic development is the top priority. Development journalists regard the economic development of their countries as their professional obligations.

Civic journalism, however, is perceived arising from many social problems including deteriorating social order, an apathetic public, and a declining participation in public affairs by average citizens. The civic journalism movement has appeared in the United States, which is still regarded as one of the richest nations in the world. Thus, the problems civic journalists set themselves to address are more social and political than economic. They are concerned with the communities, the state of public life and the health of democracy.

The reality is that economic problems are often related with social and political problems and vice versa. Poverty in developing countries often has to do with social inequality, or a repressive political system. Likewise, "bad neighborhoods" in the United States are usually places where low-income families live. Tackling one aspect of the national or community problems may not be as effective as dealing with them from different perspectives.

3. Agenda-setting: Top-down vs. Bottom-up

Development journalism is not meant to just print government handouts. But most developing countries have national development plans, which means that journalists will explain the bigger picture to the people. Also in most developing countries, information is concentrated in the hands of the governments, especially central governments. Therefore, like it or not, journalists often turn to governments for information about national development. As the resources in these countries are rather limited, media's capacity to collect information on their own or set up their own data base is small. This increases the media's dependency on government information despite journalists efforts to redress the situation and to increase public input.

The most salient feature of civic journalism is its bottom-up way of agenda-setting. To reconnect with the communities and the readers, public input is vital to civic journalism. Instead of focusing on the agenda of politicians, civic journalists set out to find out what is on the mind of the public. Public forums and focused group discussions are deliberate techniques to generate public discourse and public opinion from the communities. To activate the public and to revive declining circulation, media have to provide information relevant to the people. Civic journalism is a deliberate attempt to change the top-down way of communication. It intentionally shifts the source of information from Washington to the communities. People's concerns become top priorities and make into news agendas of the media. It is an alternative way of agenda-setting. As discussed above, some media critics see this as giving up editorial decision-making.

Development journalists can borrow some of the techniques of civic journalists in inviting public input. People are the source of wisdom. They know best what they are doing. But their horizon is limited by their personal experiences, so promoting information exchange among the people or horizontal flow of information can help national development effectively. Also making governments aware of people's concerns would aid the development process.

4. Vista: Panoramic View vs. Localized View

Development journalists more often than not offer wider views to their audiences than civic journalists. Development journalists tend to provide a vision of the future of development to their readers to boost the confidence of the people. And when they talk about development, it is more often the development of national economy. When they talk about the living standards of people, they include all the people in the nation.

Civic journalists' primary concerns are with the communities. They attempt to revive public life in the community by getting people in the community informed about the state of community affairs. They intend to get the people in the community to talk with each other about public affairs. They tend to focus people's mind on local affairs.

This is not to say that development journalists cover national issues only or civic journalists care about communities only. Development journalism and civic journalism have different focus of coverage.

When development journalism is practiced, individuals and communities get lost in the big picture, which may distance state plans from people's daily life, and thus, dampen people's enthusiasm for national development. Also if only the big picture is given, development plans may remain merely rhetoric.

For civic journalism, as long as it co-exists with traditional journalism, there is no real danger of limiting people's mind to community concerns.

IV. Conclusion: The Unmistakable Emerging Trend

Development journalism and public journalism clearly point to an unmistakable emerging trend away from the more traditional passive way of practicing journalism, a trend favoring a more activist role for the press. As different as any two social practices can be, development journalism and civic journalism share one major characteristic -- they have a mission to fulfill beyond telling the news. Social institutions evolve as the society itself changes. When societies encounter new problems and people get frustrated over the inability of the social institutions in surmounting those problems, professionals in those institutions will inevitably try to work out new ways of dealing with those problems. That may in part explain why the two new forms of journalism coming out of totally different media systems and social contexts should share so much in common. They are the inevitable results of the development of modern society and that of journalism.

Today, it seems that passivity is passed and activism is in. Whether this trend can last and how strong it will be depend on the outcome of these two ambitious experiments. When the two accomplish what they set out to achieve, the pendulum of history may start to swing in the other direction.

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Tim Gallimore
Assistant Professor
School of Journalism
University of Missouri
76B Gannett Hall
Columbia. MO 65211
Jourtag@showme.missouri.edu
573-882-7965

Lillian Dunlap
Assistant Professor
School of Journalism
University of Missouri
286 Gannett Hall
Columbia. MO 65211
Jourlrd@showme.missouri.edu
573-882-6633

"Investigative Reporting About Minorities in America"

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"Investigative Reporting about Minorities in America"

> "In uncovering evidence, establishing facts, and searching for truth in as impartial a manner as possible, investigative reporting appeals to a higher moral order, an innate sense of right and wrong that ultimately will punish institutional malfeasance." [1]

Introduction

There is no exact date and place identifiable as the historical origin of investigative reporting. Some scholars trace the tradition back to the New Testament writers who were attempting to counter the official version of the Roman government. Early fiction writers like Charles Dickens wrote exposes of social injustices that appeared first as newspaper series.[2]

The investigative reporting tradition in America can be traced back to 1900 when conscientious newspaper publishers and some popular magazines became advocates of the people. They turned their attention to more aggressive reporting on the increasing problems of the cities and urban life. In 1902, *McClure*'s magazine printed an issue with articles by Ida Tarbell, Ray Stannard Baker and Lincoln Steffens. These legendary investigative journalists focused on governmental wrongdoing at the beginning of the twentieth century. Dubbed the "muckrakers" in a 1906 speech by President Theodore Roosevelt, they embarked on a great crusade to rid American society of its ills by exposing corruption in both business and government, exposing abuses of basic individual rights and focusing attention on the inequitable distribution of wealth.

The golden era of the muckrakers lasted until 1912. However, the tradition of doing journalism for moral and social improvement continued through the 1920s and 1930s with the work of lone crusading journalists like Heywood Broun, Upton Sinclair and Paul Y.

Anderson of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. Others like George Seldes and I.F. Stone, with the help of small-circulation magazines like *The Nation*, continued the muckraking tradition through the 1940s and 1950s until its rebirth as investigative reporting in the late 1960s.[3]

Individual journalists like freelancer Seymour Hersh and columnist Jack Anderson were a bridge between the old muckrakers of the past and the infamous *Washington Post* reporting team of Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein who ushered in what we now know as investigative reporting. These journalist carried on the tradition of exposing corruption and wrongdoing with the aid of citizen-activists like Ralph Nader and government "whistle-blowers" like Sen. William Proxmire famous for making his "golden fleece" awards exposing wasteful government spending. The Freedom of Information Act which became law on July 4, 1967 also gave journalists a powerful tool with which to pry open files and conduct their investigations of the Executive agencies of the federal government.[4]

Facing competition from television news in the late 1960s, newspapers saw reform or investigative journalism as a way to maintain their edge in informing the public. In a 1970 article describing the re-emergence of investigative journalism, Carey McWilliams editor of the *Nation* wrote, "In general both newspapers and magazines have begun to feel that muckraking or investigative journalism is a useful means of countering network news."[5] With the luxury of time and the permanency of print, newspapers capitalized on their natural advantages over TV and started doing longer, investigative stories. Starting in 1967, publications like *Newsday* and the Associated Press assembled teams of reporters dedicated to investigative reporting.[6]

Over the years, newspapers lost their exclusive hold on investigative journalism. Network television news divisions have produced investigative reports and documentaries every bit as powerful as the traditional muckraking magazines. The 1971 CBS documentary "The Selling of the Pentagon" is one example. Today, most major newspapers have investigative reporting teams and the television newsmagazine programs like "60 Minutes" "20/20" and "Dateline" continue the broadcasting tradition of investigative reporting on a somewhat regular basis.

Investigative journalism got a real boost in 1975 with the founding of Investigative Reporters and Editors (IRE). With the goal of promoting good investigative reporting, the non-profit educational organization started in Reston, Va. with about 30 reporters and editors. Today the organization has 4,500 members and is headquartered at the University of Missouri School of Journalism. The organization helps working journalists, journalism students and educators to practice and teach techniques of investigative reporting through conference workshops, newsroom seminars and a bimonthly magazine, *The IRE Journal*. IRE also provides telephone and computer assistance to members who can access its holdings of 10,000 investigative reports that have been published or broadcast since its founding. The organization also produces *The Reporter's Handbook: An Investigator's Guide to Documents and Techniques*. Most important, however, is the annual competition that IRE conducts to recognize the best investigative reporting done by the nation's media.

The Journalism of Outrage

There are many definitions of investigative reporting. The definitions typically focus on how journalists obtain information "rather than its societally relevant results."[7] Investigative reporting has been called "the journalism of exposure" because of its emphasis on the watchdog function of a vigilant media eager to expose corruption. The authors of the most widely used textbook on news writing define investigative journalism as, "The pursuit of information that has been concealed, such as evidence of wrongdoing."[8]

Investigative reporting is a type of journalistic practice that requires a reporter to use enterprise, skills and techniques over and above those used in normal news gathering to find out and report information of importance to the public. Very often such information is gathered from original documents and data that uncooperative or reluctant sources attempt to conceal. Investigative reporters use scientific methods for gathering information and testing hypotheses. "The goal of this process is to arrive at an independently verified truth that can serve as a launching point for reform."[9] This approach for uncovering facts and establishing truths is sometimes called precision journalism. Philip Meyer was an early practitioner of precision journalism. He used social scientific methods to uncover alienation as the key cause behind the 1967 riot in Detroit. "The story's reporting techniques enabled the *Free Press* to explode the myth that the rioters were Southern immigrants who could not adjust to big city life."[10]

Reporters have now added the computer to their arsenal of investigative tools. Don Barlett and James Steele were pioneers in using computers for Investigative reporting. They used computers to analyze Philadelphia criminal court records for a 1972 investigative series. The series exposed unfair sentencing practices and other irregularities in the local criminal justice system."[11]

Another important element of investigative reporting is its focus on exposing social injustice and providing recourse as a public service. The IRE definition of investigative reporting includes this expose element. In 1983, IRE adopted this definition of investigative reporting:

> It is the reporting, through one's own work product and initiative, matters of importance which some persons or organizations wish to keep secret.

> The three basic elements are that the investigation be the work of the reporter, not a report of an investigation made by someone else; that the subject of the story involves something of reasonable importance to the reader or viewer, and that others are attempting to hide these matters from the public.[12]

However, there has been ongoing disagreement in the IRE ranks about the requirement that investigative reports concern information that others attempt to conceal. This part of the definition has been under renewed attack because investigative reporters, with the aid of the computer, have been able to uncover bits of seemingly insignificant information that, when assembled, reveal important societal issues and problems that don't involve coverups. Many times the custodians of the information and records themselves don't realize the important truths that are buried in the data that investigative journalists analyze for their reports.

The controversy among IRE members resurfaced when Steve Weinberg refined the definition of investigative reporting in the 1996 edition of the IRE *Reporter's Handbook* which he edited. "Weinberg's definition edits out the requirements of evasion or stonewalling."[13] Weinberg and others argue that the old definition narrows and limits the work of the investigative reporter by rewarding unimaginative reporting that focuses exclusively on organized crime and corruption stories. In the new edition of the Handbook, Weinberg quotes veteran investigative reporter Gene Roberts who said, "investigative reporting is 'not so much catching the politician with his pants down or focusing on a single outrage. It's digging beneath the surface so we can help readers understand what's going on in an increasingly complex world.'"[14]

Historians and media scholars have noted that, "the purpose of investigative journalism historically has been to tell stories of wrongdoing that will stir moral outrage."[15] In

1988, communication researchers James Ettema and Theodore Glasser termed investigative reporting "the journalism of outrage." In several of their studies, Glasser and Ettema demonstrate how investigative journalists use language to provoke this sense of moral outrage.[16] Investigative journalists count on this sense of outrage to bring about change in the circumstances and issues they report on. "A basic goal of the journalists of outrage is to *trigger* agenda-building processes in order to produce 'reformist' outcomes--policy changes that promote democracy, efficiency, or social justice."[17]

The focus on societal reform, born in the Progressive era, is supported by the concept of a watchdog press and it is a special mission of the investigative journalist. One researcher explained that

> More than a news-gathering process, the journalism of outrage is a form of storytelling that probes the boundaries of America's civic conscience. Published allegations of wrongdoing--political corruption, government inefficiency, corporate abuses--help define public morality in the United States. Journalistic exposes that trigger outrage from the public or policy makers affirm society's standards of misconduct. Societal indifference to investigative disclosures constitutes evidence of morally tolerable, if not ethically acceptable behavior.
>
> Investigative journalists *intend* to provoke outrage in their reports of malfeasance. Their work is validated when citizens respond by demanding change from their leaders. Similarly, corrective policy actions provide official legitimacy to an investigative story. Investigative reporters find personal satisfaction in doing stories that lead to civic betterment.[18]

It is perhaps too early to draw definitive conclusions about the overall impact of investigative reporting in bringing about change in society. The results of such reporting have so far been inconsistent.[19] At times, laws have been changed and corruption has been rooted out. At other times the work of the investigative journalist has been ignored by would-be reformers. However, "muckraking, a perennial force in American life, will no doubt continue to inspire reform were there exists a basis of popular indignation."[20]

Investigative Reporting and Minorities

In a sense, one could say that reporting on the condition of minorities in America began with the appearance of *Freedom's Journal* on March 16, 1827. Dissatisfied with how mainstream papers of their time covered the issue of slavery, John B. Russwurm and Reverend Samuel Cornish started publishing *Freedom's Journal* so that blacks could plead their own cause and illuminate the conditions under which they were forced to live. Muckraking took on a new phase when it started to focus on racial issues in 1908. "Not content merely to arouse public opinion,. individual muckrakers attempted to translate indignation into positive programs for change."[21]

During the muckraking era, Charles Edward Russell investigated racial and industrial conditions in the South for the *New York Herald*. Revolted by segregation and the poor treatment of blacks, Russell joined with Lincoln Steffens and others to support the founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.[22] Since then, investigative journalism has matured to more detailed and substantive reporting on the nation's minority groups. In fact, the mass protest against the deplorable socio-economic conditions of African-Americans, better known as the Civil Rights Movement, is credited with the revival and re-emergence of investigative journalism in the 1960s.[23] This contribution iincludes the New York Times v. Sullivan Supreme Court decision making it more difficult for the media to be successfully sued for libel when they report on public figures and controversial social issues.

Among the exemplary work that has been done is the 1972 expose of the 40-year Tuskegee experiment conducted by the United States Public Health Service (PHS) to observe the effects of untreated syphilis on 400 black men in Macon County, Alabama. The experiment started in 1932 when the results of untreated syphilis were already known to medical science. Promising free health treatment and a proper burial, the Public Health Service and the Tuskegee Institute recruited poor black men infected with the disease to participate in the study. The men, mostly sharecroppers, were not told that they were part of an experiment. Neither were they given any treatment, even after penicillin was discovered as a cure for syphilis in the 1940s. Doctors conducting the experiment simply observed and documented the progression of the disease until the subjects died. After death, they conducted autopsies on the men and compared their medical condition to that of 200 healthy black men in a control group. The PHS gave $50 to each family of a deceased subject for consenting to the autopsy of their relative.

The experiment continued until Jean Heller, an investigative reporter with the Associated Press, broke the story on July 25, 1972 in the *Washington Star*.[24] "The expose generated national press attention and a swift public reaction of outrage."[25] Once the news of the 40-year experiment was made public, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention which inherited the project, the Tuskegee Institute and most of those involved over the years, started to deny involvement and distanced themselves from the affair. Others justified their participation on the basis of the racist views of black inferiority that were prevalent when the experiment began.

"When the Associated Press broke the story in 1972, a shocked public drew comparisons with the Nazis' Nuremberg experiments. Neither contrite nor apologetic, most of the study's senior physicians offered inadequate scientific defenses and improbable moral ones." [26] The major newspapers carried the expose and editorial comments condemning the experiment, especially the federal government's involvement in it.

The federal government appointed a blue-ribbon panel to investigate the experiment and to make recommendations on improving federal policies to protect the rights of patients participating in government-supported health research projects. The study was terminated on October 27, 1972. A $1.8 billion class-action suit was filed against the government on behalf of the men in the experiment. The case was settled out of court for $12 million. Syphilitic survivors of the experiment got $37,500 each, those in the control group got $15,000 and the estates of the deceased got lesser amounts.[27]

Because of the experiment, the sexual partners of the syphilic men were not told that they too were exposed to the disease and many children were born with congenital syphilis in the black community. This lead to charges that the government experiment amounted to a genocidal attack on the black population. Similar charges were made that the government is responsible for the introduction and spread of AIDS among African-Americans.[28]

Literature Review

In order to identify the studies that scholars have already published on minorities and investigative reporting, we conduced a bibliographic search using several computer databases. Among them were: PAIS International, ERIC, Journalism/communication Abstracts and Dissertation Abstracts. The searches revealed that very few academic works exist on this specific topic. Dissertation Abstracts listed only two theses related to this topic. They are: "Geographic Discrimination in Mortgage Lending: An empirical Investigation," by Paul R. Goebel (University of Georgia, 1980), and "At The Bar of Judge Lynch: Lynching and Lynch Mobs in America," by John R. Ross (Texas Tech University, 1983). The Ross thesis includes investigative reports of the NAACP and other civil rights groups as well as newspaper reports in the archives of the Tuskegee Institute.

The most comprehensive analysis of investigative reporting and minorities is found in *Muckraking. Past Present and Future,* edited by John M. Harrison and Harry H. Stein. Chapter 3, "Race Relations and the Muckrakers" is devoted to the topic. The chapter pointed out that muckraking had a greater impact on the public with respect to urban corruption than it had on the plight of the disenfranchised negro. *Pearson's* and *Hampton's* were two magazine that distinguished themselves during the muckraking era with their specific focus on racial discrimination and injustice.

Although there is disagreement among historians about the contributions of muckraking to the cause of American minorities, some argue that "the muckrakers made a considerable contribution to the cause of Negro rights."[29] Among the early works cited in the Harrison and Stein chapter is Ray Stannard Baker's 1908 series, "Following the Color Line." The muckraking magazines, *McClure's* , *The Nation, The New Republic, Cosmopolitan*, and the *Atlantic Monthly* published stories about lynchings, riots, the selling of convict labor and what was generally referred to as "the race question."

The great muckrakers apparently ignored racism and segregation as they exposed the other evils of their times. Other muckrakers, like Will Irwin and Ray Stannard Baker, were accused of racism and complicity with the social order of inequality. "Steffens and Russell, whatever their personal views, barely mentioned Negroes in their published work."[30] Both men ascribed to the popular conception of a hierarchy of the races and viewed the negro as inferior. In his private letters, Steffens, referred to negroes as "niggers."[31]

In 1970, Herbert Shapiro published "The Muckrakers and Negroes" in the Spring issue of *Phylon*.[32] That article chronicles the early muckrakers' attempt to cover the conditions of African-Americans. Shapiro concludes that what the muckrakers wrote was more of a coverup than an expose of America's treatment of African-Americans. Shaprio's analysis of their writings showed that the muckrakers from Baker to Upton Sinclair spread racist stereotypes about blacks and condoned the racial hierarchy of their times. "Whatever evaluation is made of what the muckrakers had to say about Negroes, it should be observed that only rarely does it appear as a central theme in the crusade."[33] Despite the shortcomings in the muckrakers' attention to racial injustice, Shapiro concluded that they "punched a hole in the wall of ignorance and silence meant to keep Negroes from the attention of the entire country."[34]

Methods and Search Strategies

Because the academic literature about investigative journalism and minorities is so sparse, original research on the topic must be done to document the contributions of the media in this arena. As a first step in that effort, we conducted several searches to identify investigative reports on minorities. Race relations, criminal justice, environmental racism and redlining were chosen as special topics for the focus of our analysis.

Investigative stories that appeared in the print media were identified through computer searches of the Expanded Academic Index (1980-1995), the Nexis database; and the National Newspaper Index (1993-1996). The IRE database was used to find investigative reports that appeared in both broadcast and print media between 1975 and 1995. The analysis also included stories from the Radio and Television News Directors Association (RTNDA) competition. The tapes covering 1984-1994 are indexed and archived in the broadcasting department at the University of Missouri.

In identifying investigative stories, we focused on reporting that went beyond the normal beat story or coverage of the breaking news event. Included in the analysis are stories that exposed problems, issues and trends that were reported on using interviewing and documentation techniques common to extended and extensive investigation. These stories uncovered new information of significance to understanding the larger issues, context and conditions of minority populations in the U.S. The reporter had to dig up the facts rather than rely on reports from government or private non-journalistic institutions. We also assessed the impact that the reporting had, especially changes in law or social practice that resulted.

We found 88 investigative stories during our search. The bulk of them, 73, were published in newspapers of all circulation sizes and from all regions of the country. Ten of the stories were produced by broadcasters. Only five of the 88 investigative stories we found were published in magazines. Of those five, only one general circulation magazine, *U.S. News & World Report*, published an investigative report on the four minority issues we focused on for the study. This was a surprising finding given the historically central role that magazines have played in muckraking origins of investigative journalism. The specifics of our findings are reported by topic below and in four accompanying tables.

Race relations

The media in many large cities have done investigative reports on the relations between the minority and majority populations. Also common are assessments of the conditions of African American citizens over a period of time, usually from the death of Martin Luther King Jr. or some major riot that the city experienced during the Civil Rights era. We found about 20 such articles that appeared between 1975 and 1995. See Table 1.

The year-long public journalism project on race relations published by the *Akron Beacon-Journal* in 1993 won a Pulitzer Prize for social service. The project was comprised of five series of articles that appeared between February 28 and December 29, 1993. The series surveyed conditions of blacks and whites 30 years after Martin Luther King Jr. described his vision of a color-blind American society. The examination revealed that relations between the races had changed very little. The socio-economic conditions of African-Americans had not improved significantly. More importantly, the series documented that "regardless of income level, blacks are less likely to get mortgage or business loans."[35]

The *Boston Globe* also won a Pulitzer Prize in 1984 for its six-part series on race relations that it published throughout 1983. The *Globe* won in the "special investigative" category for its local reporting on conditions for minorities in Boston. The series was the result of a decision taken by the editors after the violence of the 1970s over school busing to periodically examine race relations in the city's institutions.

The focus of the *Globe's* series was on the hiring and promotion of blacks in high technology, banks, newspapers, crafts unions, colleges and universities and government. The investigative team of seven journalists used statistics and interviews with African-American and Hispanic residents and leaders of the city's most powerful institutions to gather information for the series. The *Globe's* investigation found that Boston was the hardest metropolitan area in America for an African-American to hold a job or earn a promotion.

Broadcasters have also contributed to exposing the state of America's race relations. KMOX Radio in St. Louis won a George Foster Peabody Award for its series, "Hate Crimes: America's Cancer," which examined race relations in Missouri. The reports were aired between January 25 and February 5, 1989. The reporting resulted in the state legislature strengthening Missouri statutes dealing with ethnic intimidation.

Similar stories on race relations were broadcast or published in Nashville (WSMV-TV, 1986); Chicago (WTTW-TV, 1993); Indianapolis (*Star*, 1993); Cincinnati (*Post*, 1987); New Orleans (*Times-Picayune*, 1993); and elsewhere. Over the years, investigative journalists have quietly gone about their work documenting systemic discrimination against American minorities from the cradle to the grave. Among the more interesting, or outrageous, findings from these investigative projects was one that appeared in *The* (New Jersey) *Record* documenting historical discrimination by cemetery operators who refused to bury blacks and whites in the same cemeteries in Hackensack and neighboring cities in New Jersey.[36]

Crime, Law and Justice

The journalists of the muckraking era filled the popular magazines with stories about lawlessness in America. However, they demonstrated "little knowledge of the subcultures and functioning of the justice-delivery system."[37] Their accounts included stories about judicial, political and business corruption; lynchings; police brutality; rioting; and slave-labor contracting. Although they chronicled the disparity in the legal treatment of whites and blacks, the muckrakers were more concerned about unchecked economic power and the corruption of capitalism than about injustices afflicted on the Negroes in their society.

In assessing 13 years of IRE investigative reporting award winners, former IRE Executive Director Steve Weinberg found that today's investigative journalists wrote about the same topics and themes as did the muckrakers. The top three categories among 52 winning entries concerned waste, fraud, abuse and corruption in all levels of government and in local law enforcement.[38] During the 13-year period, only four awards were given to investigative stories about racial discrimination. However, the trend did show that journalists reported on racism in the judicial system when it involved arrest, bail and sentencing as well as other types of discrimination stories involving housing rental and mortgage lending. Inspired by the 1991 Rodney King beating in Los Angeles, many journalists wrote stories about police brutality. "Almost all of the brutality stories contain elements of racial discrimination."[39]

For the period we examined, the IRE database and the RTNDA archives contain 32 investigative reports about minorities and all aspects of the criminal justice system. See Table 2. With one exception, these investigative reports demonstrate over and over again that racial bias and inequalities permeate the nation's judicial system. The reporting produced evidence that minorities are questioned, harassed, arrested, abused and brutalized by police in greater percentages than whites. Minorities have less access to bail and adequate legal counsel than whites and they often are given longer prison sentences than whites who are convicted of the same crimes. An early example of these reports is the *Charleston (W. Va.) Gazette* series which appeared between March 1976 and April 1978. The series uncovered questionable practices among judges and court inequities, including disparate sentencing, especially for black defendants.

The investigative reports on criminal justice also document that there are fewer and fewer minorities among the ranks of prosecutors and judges. The investigations also chronicle the trend by courts to exclude black jurors from participation. The one exception to the finding of bias and inequality in the judicial system came in a 1984 *Miami Herald* report based on a computerized study of the Dade County Circuit Court's jury system. The report found that, contrary to charges of being unfair and discriminatory against blacks, the Dade County system is actually racially balanced.[40]

Environmental Racism

The term environmental racism is a fairly new one and it embodies a new concern for American minorities. Industrialization and the nuclear age produced an increasing volume of extremely toxic waste products that must be disposed of. How and where society disposes of these hazardous waste products and the location of plants that produce them in the first place are important questions being investigated by journalists. Their findings to date indicate that minority communities are disproportionately chosen as the location for plants and factories producing the wastes and these communities are also the primary disposal sites for them. Journalists have documented that the federal government is among the perpetrators of environmental racism.

From 1993 to 1996 there were 6 stories about environmental racism in the major newspapers indexed in the National Newspaper Index. Between 1980 and 1996, there were 20 such stories indexed in the Infotrack and Expanded Academic Index databases. Most of these stories appeared in legal, scientific, or environmental journals. The only mass circulation magazine that even reported on the topic was *U.S. News & World Report* which ran a two-page article in 1992.[41] Only one of these stories was considered an investigative report based on our definition for this study. That story, which is discussed below, also won an IRE award. The IRE database was used to identify 8 other investigative stories on environmental racism. See Table 3.

A team of *National Law Journal* reporters won a 1993 IRE award for their reporting on environmental racism. The story was titled "Unequal Protection: The Racial Divide in

Environmental Law." The article was published on Sept. 21, 1992. The team was able to prove that there was a disparity in how the federal government cleans up toxic waste sites and punishes polluters. As suspected, information from the article demonstrated that the most dangerous pollution is in minority communities and that the Environmental Protection Agency was much more vigorous in prosecuting polluters for polluting in white communities than in minority communities. Those polluters also were more heavily fined than the ones who polluted minority communities.

As a result of the article, Congress pledged to hold hearings on the findings and a manufacturer canceled plans to build the world's largest pulp plant in a small black community featured in the article. In addition, the EPA's enforcement chief sent a memo to field offices warning them to guard against bias in all stages of the enforcement process.[42]

In 1993, the *Dallas Morning News* exposed a government housing plan that would have forced thousands of African-American families to live in a crime-infested, government-owned ghetto that was going to be declared a Superfund toxic contamination site. As a result of the expose, the project was abandoned.

A 1991 series in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* reported how the federal government polluted the environment on Indian lands, including Mohawk land in New York and uranium mining sites in the Southwest. The reports indicated that federal authorities also gave polluted land to unsuspecting Native Americans in Alaska.

In 1986, WGN-TV in Chicago aired "My Toxic Neighbor" which identified a perfect example of environmental racism. The journalists investigated the effects of a nearby chemical plant on residents and on the plant workers. Most of the neighbors were African Americans. The series and follow-up reports caused the EPA to focus attention on the problem and speed up steps to protect plant employees and the public. Results also included Senator Alan Dixon's call for immediate off-site testing, and the EPA doing the testing on an accelerated schedule.

Redlining

There were many laws that came out of the Civil Rights era aimed at eliminating racial segregation and discrimination in all aspects of American society. Among them were the Fair Housing Act and the Equal Credit Opportunity Act guaranteeing minorities equal access to housing and to the financing to afford it. Widespread noncompliance with these laws was the order of the day and the nation continued its historical pattern of segregated housing as financial institutions denied mortgage loans to African-Americans. This practice, known as redlining, is defined as the refusal by financial institutions to make mortgage loans to residents of certain neighborhoods because of the racial composition, income level of the residents or age of the housing stock.

The Home Mortgage Disclosure Act of 1975 was added to the arsenal of legal weapons with which to combat the discriminatory practice of redlining. The Act mandated the collection of demographic data on mortgage lending to better identify patterns of discrimination in lending. In 1977, Congress passed the Community Reinvestment Act as a key element to outlawing redlining. The Act requires financial institutions to invest in all geographic areas served by their branches. The Act also requires lenders to meet the credit needs of all segments of the community.

Through monitoring compliance with these laws and through their own investigations, journalists are able to report on the level of access minorities have to mortgage loans and other kinds of credit. The media have had their greatest impact on improving the conditions of American minorities through their coverage exposing the continuing practice of redlining. From 1993 to 1996 there were 13 stories on mortgage discrimination in the major newspapers indexed in the National Newspaper Index. The Expanded Academic Index lists 65 news stories on the topic for the period between 1980 and 1996. The Nexis database included 428 items on redlining and minorities between 1989 and 1995. The specific contribution of investigative reporting on this topic is seen in the 28 stories listed in Table 4.

With the coming of the information age, "information redlining", also called "electronic redlining", became a concern for minority and poor communities against which financial institutions and information service providers found a new way to discriminate. Just as with mortgage loans, there is a pattern developing where minorities are systematically being denied access to information technology and the infrastructure that will deliver information services in the future. The regional telephone companies have been charged with redlining on the high-tech information highway. The phone companies are systematically bypassing low-income and minority neighborhoods as they plan and install the digital dial tone network to deliver "video-on-demand" services.

As early as 1981, journalists were investigating charges of electronic redlining by the cable TV industry. It appeared that cable providers were selectively wiring to bypass large sections of minority communities threatening to deprive them of important services that cable promised to deliver. These services included security and fire alarm systems, electronic banking, shopping and news delivery.

Black Enterprise magazine reported on the selective marketing of cable TV to upscale groups to the exclusion of all others. The reporter warned that the selective cable wiring and marketing practices would create a new kind of black ghetto isolated by a lack of information. The reporter concluded that, "Electronic redlining is not a fantasy. It is as real as the economic redlining practiced by many banks."[43]

Insurance redlining is the most recent addition to the continuing practice of financial discrimination against minorities and the poor in America. This type of redlining is carried out by insurance companies that refuse coverage or charge more for covering properties in minority communities. Investigative journalists reporting on redlining often include minority access to and the cost of insurance as part of their investigations. On July 20, 1994, the House of Representatives passed legislation focusing on insurance redlining.[44]

Critics of insurance redlining, argue that just as the case with mortgage lending, insurance coverage involves assessment of financial risk and appropriate denial of applicants deemed too risky. They say that redlining does not exist and that institutions are just practicing good financial management and are not engaged in racial discrimination.

More recent media exposes on the topic show that the new redlining is different from the old but that minorities are still getting shortchanged in banking, insurance and other economic activities. A 1995 investigative story by *U.S. News & World Report* came to this conclusion based on a six-month investigation of banking, lending, and home insurance coverage in poor and minority neighborhoods. The report was based on analysis of 24 million mortgage records, nine sets of banking and insurance industry data and 200 interviews in 12 cities. The investigation demonstrates that not much has changed. Minorities of all income levels are denied mortgages and home insurance coverage at more than twice the rate of whites with comparable incomes.[45]

Successful Series

For the last 96 years, muckrakers of all types have been stirring up moral outrage and calling for social progress for minorities. Their success has been limited. Past investigative reporting on general race relations might have pricked the collective conscience momentarily but the continuing poor lot and treatment of American minorities indicate that few lasting changes have resulted. Exposes of corruption and inequities in the criminal justice system at times have produced more just and humane treatment for single individuals caught up in the web of the law. However, systemic bias, neglect and abuse characterize the relationship of minorities to the system. Reporting on the new scourge of environmental racism seems to be having more of an impact but it is too early to tell if it will be lasting.

It is in covering economic discrimination, or redlining, that investigative journalism seems to have made its greatest contribution to exposing and improving conditions for American minorities. The impact of journalists' work in this area can be seen in the actions that legislators and the business community have taken as a direct result of the reporting. Often there are follow up stories about these actions and results by the media outlets that conducted the investigations.

A June 1980 *Chicago Tribune* series shows how members of the black community pay higher insurance rates and lose out on federal block grant funds and bank money as government officials and investors choose to funnel that money into "safer" investments in the white neighborhoods of Chicago. See IRE No. 702 on Table 4.

The series, called "The Black Tax," was based on a three-month investigation of how, despite anti discrimination laws, the black community still pays more and gets less of everything. Within days of publication, the Illinois Legislature, the Chicago City Council and Cooke County officials took action to solve the problems highlighted in the "Black Tax" series. Hearings were held on mortgage lending, insurance rating, tax assessments, government housing rehabilitation and tenant displacement in the black community. This was an example of how the new investigative journalism produced reform and positive social change.[46]

By far, the most well-known and successful investigative reporting on redlining was done for the "The Color of Money" project. The *Atlanta Journal and Constitution* won the 1988 Pulitzer-Prize for this series on redlining in Atlanta's African-American neighborhoods. Written by Bill Dedman, the series ran between May 1 and 16. See IRE No. 4705 on Table 4. Dedman used database reporting and help from university researchers to document how Atlanta banks routinely discriminated against middle-class African-American applicants for housing loans.

More than just informing its readers with the series, the paper's efforts lead to change in the system just as in the muckraking days gone by. "The banks set up a $72 million fund to enable Atlantans with modest incomes to gain access to mortgages. ... Beyond that, the banks increased in various ways their receptivity to black loan applicants to the extent that over the next five years the turn-down ratio was cut nearly in half."[47] As a result of the series, national attention was focused once again on redlining and there was reform in the banking industry. The most important regulatory reform that resulted was a change in how lending institutions must report data on loans. These institutions must now disclose the race of successful and denied loan applicants so that federal bank examiners can more easily assess compliance with the lending laws.

There also were many government agency reports and studies of lending in other areas of the country that resulted from the "Color of Money" series. The longer-term results are seen in the number of articles in professional publications warning the lending community that it needed to comply with the law and to better report on lending in minority communities. "Potential for CRA Trouble Just Doubled," appeared in the November 1989 *ABA Banking Journal*, (Vol. 81, No. 11, p. 26), crediting the "Color of Money" series with having a sudden and "massive impact" on the banking industry's compliance and reporting on mortgage and home improvement lending. In "Watching Out for Number One," a compliance report that appeared in the May 1990 *ABA Banking Journal*, (Vol. 82, No. 5, p. 71), the writer warned that "Too few bank CEOs are familiar with 'The Color of Money'."

In addition to the usual accolades that accompany winning the Pulitzer Prize, Bill Dedman and his series were praised by the profession for making a difference and breathing life back into investigative journalism which perhaps saw its zenith during the Watergate scandal. Dedman and the *Journal-Constitution* had new tools and techniques with which to do the investigative job. The "Color of Money" was cited as an example of how to use computer-assisted reporting methods for doing investigative journalism.[48]

Other journalists and media outlets followed the lead of the *Journal-Constitution* and started investigating lending in their locales. Two "Frontline" documentaries, "Race and Credit" and "Your Loan is Denied" ran in June 1992 on public television stations. The documentaries were produced by the Center for Investigative Reporting and indicated renewed interest in exposing discriminatory practices in mortgage lending.

The "Color of Money" series was cited in a July 1993 *Black Enterprise* article.[49] Several academic journals in various disciplines also published articles on redlining following the "Color of Money" series. Many of these articles mention or quote from the series. They include: "What Do We Know About Racial Discrimination in Mortgage Markets?" *Review of Black Political Economy*, Vol. 22, No.1, p. 101 (Summer, 1993); and "Perspectives on Mortgage Lending and Redlining," *Journal of the American Planning Association*, Vol. 60, No. 3, p. 344-354 (Summer 1994).

Not all investigative reports on redlining met with the same success or acceptance as the "Color of Money" series. In a 1993 three-part series, the *Washington Post* exposed the racially biased system of home lending that exists in the Washington, D.C. area. The series showed that local banks and savings and loans provided mortgages to white neighborhoods at twice the rate they did to comparable African-American neighborhoods.

The *Post's* series on redlining was disputed in the *National Review* one month after the series was published. A commentator, Llewellyn H. Rockwell Jr., accused the *Post* of "engaging in demagoguery" and "excessive aggregation which disguises the truth" about the statistics showing a black--white disparity in loan approval rates.[50] Rockwell similarly criticized the "Color of Money" series and a March 1992 *Wall Street Journal* article based on a study of Federal Reserve Bank data which the *Journal* concluded shows that banks systematically discriminated against minorities.

Conclusion

It is difficult to link improvement in race relations to the work of investigative reporters. In fact, the weight of evidence suggests that not much significant improvement has taken place despite the rhetoric and legislation of the past 30 years. The criminal justice system still appears to be as corrupt and racist as ever in its treatment of minorities. This is perhaps because societal attitudes and rogue individual behavior are far more difficult to change than it is to measure compliance with the law and to embarrass institutions with a financial incentive into treating minorities justly and fairly.

We have found that a variety of media outlets have been active in investigating and reporting on minorities and minority issues over the years. The participants include large and small-circulation newspapers, radio and TV stations, and the legal, professional and advocacy journals. Unlike the muckraking magazines of old that began the expose and outrage reporting, today's general circulation magazines are doing much less investigative reporting. Although our analysis focused on databases and the IRE organization which may tend to include more newspaper stories, a search of the Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature, which indexes magazines, did not uncover any investigative reports on the four issues we decided to examine for this study.[51]

Our original research on the topic of investigative journalism and its contributions to publicizing the complete picture of minority groups in the U.S. indicates that much work has been done by the media. However, prior to our study, this journalistic work has not been analyzed and reported in the scholarly literature.

Endnotes

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3. See James L. Aucoin, "The Re-emergence of American Investigative Journalism 1960-1975," Journalism History 21:1 (Spring 1995), p. 3-15.

4. The Freedom of Information Act can be found at 5 U.S.C.A. Sect. 552.

5. Carey McWilliams, "Is Muckraking Coming Back?" *Columbia Journalism Review*, Fall 1970, p. 12.

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7. David L. Protess, et al., *The Journalism of Outrage: Investigative Reporting and Agenda Building in America* (New York: Guilford, 1991), p. 4.

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9. Ehrlich, p. 14.

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11. Aucoin, p. 11.

12. Investigative Reporters and Editors, *The Reporters' Handbook* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983), p. vii-viii.

13. Rosemary Armao, "It's No Secret ... Or Is it?" *The IRE Journal*, Jan./Feb. 1996, p. 3.

14. Armao, p. 3.

15. Ehrlich, p. 9.

16. See J.S. Ettema and T.L. Glasser, "On the Epistemology of Investigative Journalism," in M. Gurevitch and M.R. Levy (Eds.), *Mass Communication Review Yearbook* 6, (Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage, 1987), p. 183-206, and J.S. Ettema and T.L. Glasser, "Narrative Form and Moral Force: The Realization of innocence and Guilt Through Investigative Journalism," *Journal of Communication*, 38:3, (1988), p. 8-26.

17. Protess, et al., p. 6.

18. Protess, et al., p. 5.

19. See Bruce Porter, "Pulitzer Prize-winning Exposes and Their Sometimes Dubious Consequences," *Columbia Journalism Review*, March/April 1995, p. 41-47.

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21. Harrison and Stein, p.49.

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23. Aucoin, p. 9.

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25. Tom W. Shick, "Race, Class, and Medicine: 'Bad Blood' in Twentieth-Century America," *Journal of Ethnic Studies*, 1982, 10:2, p. 97.

26. "An Experiment With Lives," *The New York Times*, June 21, 1981, Sect. 7, p. 9.

27. "Foster Disputes Alleged Link to Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment," *The Washington Post*, Feb. 25, 1995, p. A10.

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37. Harrison and Stein, p. 77.

38. Steve Weinberg, "Tracing the Trends: 1991 Award Winners," *The IRE Journal*, May/June 1992, p. 8.

39. Weinberg, p. 8.

40. "Circuit Court Jury System is racially balanced," *Miami Herald*, July 15, 1984, p. A10.

41. "A Whiff of Discrimination?" *U.S. News & World Report*, May 4, 1992, p. 34.

42. *The IRE Journal*, May/June 1993, p. 7.

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44. See "Anti Redlining in Insurance Disclosure Act," H.R. 1188, 103rd Cong. 2d. Sess., July 21, 1994.

45. "The New Redlining," *U.S. News & World Report*, April 17, 1995, p. 51.

46. See, "House Will Investigate 'Black Tax' Findings," *Chicago Tribune*, June 27, 1980, Sec. 2, p. 1; "Plan Council Move to Stop Tenants' Displacement By Rehab," *Chicago Tribune*, July 1, 1980, Sec. 1 p. 7; "Probing the 'Black Tax'," *Chicago Tribune*, July 2, 1980, Sec. 4, p. 2; "Bill Would Assist Displaced Tenants," *Chicago Tribune*, July 9, 1980, Sec. 6 p. 3; "State House Panel to Probe Redlining," *Chicago Tribune*, July 25, 1980, Sec. 1, p. 5.

47. Porter, p. 46.

48. Cecilia Friend, "Daily Newspaper Use of Computers to Analyze Data," *Newspaper Research Journal*, Vol. 15, No. 1, p. 63-72 (Winter, 1994).

49. Carolyn Brown and Matthew S. Scott, "How to Fight Mortgage Discrimination And Win!!!" *Black Enterprise*, July 1993, p. 48-59.

50. Llewellyn H. Rockwell Jr., "Discreditable Reports: Are Bankers Letting Racism Interfere With Profits? Now That Would Be News," *National Review*, July 19, 1993, p. 45.

51. We used the same keywords to search the Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature from 1932 to 1989 that we used for the computer database searches on each ethnic minority group and the four topics covered in the study. In addition, we used the keywords "black" "negro" "Afro American" and "colored" to search the earlier volumes of the Readers' Guide during the years when those terms were used to refer to African-Americans.

TABLE 1 --- INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING ON RACE RELATIONS

IRE NO	DATE	MEDIA/LOCATION	TOPIC/ISSUE
6868	May 22-27, 1988	Rocky Mountain News	condition and history of blacks
728	Feb. 1985	Dallas Morning News	low quality subsidized housing for blacks
2725	Dec.30, 1984	Asbury Park Press (NJ)	discrimination against black renters
2287	July, 1981	The Record (Hackensack,NJ)	discrimination in funeral arrangements
308	Jan, 1979	The Record	real estate discrimination
10095	May 8, 1993	Times-Picayune	race relations in New Orleans
8827	Oct.3, 1991	KUCR-Radio (Riverside, CA)	Korean & black conflict
8409	Sep.26, 1991	ABC News - primetime live	blacks treated with suspicion
6650	Sep.24-29, 1989	York Daily Record (PA)	Spanish language discrimination
8543	Oct.22-28, 1989	Times Union (Albany)	racial attitudes
6046	Oct.30, 1988	Kalamazoo Gazette	discrimination against black renters
5526	Jan.25-Feb.5, 1988	KMOX-Radio (St. Louis)	racial hatred
10373	Feb.28-Dec.29, 1994	Akron Beacon Journal	race relations
6959	Feb.28-Jan.13, 1989	Birmingham News (Ala.)	race relations
9545	Feb.21-28, 1993	Indianapolis Star	race relations
5133	June 13-19, 1987	Cincinnati Post	progress of blacks
9704	May 19, 1993	WTTW-TV Chicago	cost of racism
------	Apr. 24-Dec. 25, 1983	Boston Globe	status of blacks in workplace
------	1986	WSMV-TV Nashville	race relations 20 years after Civil Rights Act

TABLE 2 --- INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE

IRE NO	DATE	MEDIA/LOCATION	TOPIC/ISSUE
8175	Apr.17,91	Charleston News & Courier	police brutality
9233	July 22,92	Seattle Post-Intelligencer	police brutality
7344	Nov.7&Dec.16,90	Los Angeles Daily News	police use guns & dogs on minorities
2023	June, 84	Philadelphia Inquirer	dogs and minority
8025	June 16-22,91	Hartford Courant	inequities in bonds
9663	July/Aug.93	Houston Chronicle	criminal justice
8133	June 9-14,91	Evansville (Ind.) Courier	jail term for minority drug offenders
8049	Dec.8-10,91	Florida Times-Union	longer sentence for killing whites
7673	Apr.29-May 2,90	Indianapolis Star	more time for same offences
5098	Dec.13-16,87	Atlanta Constitution	double standard of justice--blacks
9923	Aug.15,93	New York Newsday	criminal justice
6789	July 30,89	WWOR-TV, Secaucus, NJ	police stop minorities in expensive cars
5673	Feb-June, 88	Asbury Park Press (NJ)	few minority prosecutors
8274	Nov/Dec, 91	Dallas Morning News	military justice
1217	July 7-12,85	Herald & Review (Decatur, IL)	exclusion of black jurors
3421	Nov.11-13,85	WTSP-TV (St. Petersburg)	FBI & Justice Dept coverup
2730	July 15,84	Miami Herald	racially balanced jury system exists
4001	Mar. 83	Fayetteville Times (NC)	judges changing verdicts after trial
9706	May, 93	Chicago Reporter	disparities in community policing
9290	Aug.25,92	Delaware County Daily Times	racial profiles & blacks arrested
9340	Nov.15-20,92	Daily Progress (Virginia)	drug law & black males
9663	July-Aug.93	Houston Chronicle	minority traffic arrests
4445	July 22,86	Princeton Packet	arbitrary police searches
4299	Mar.9-11&Dec.21,86	Dallas Morning News	excluding black jurors
2627	Dec. 78	Clarion-Ledger (Jackson, Miss.)	Mississippi hostile justice
9435	May 12-15, 91	West County Times (CA)	higher percentage black men convicted
8571	Dec.8, 91	San Jose Mercury News (CA)	plea bargain and minorities
6350	Oct. 1, 1989	Dallas Times Herald	minorities punished more severely
8348	5/19-20; 12/22-23, 1991	Times Union (Albany)	minorities more likely to be sent to jail
8571	Dec. 8, 1991	San Jose Mercury News	minorities get worse plea bargain deals
9816	Dec. 19, 1993	Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)	pre-trial release skewed to favor whites
239	Mar., 76-Apr., 78	Charleston Gazette (W.VA)	court inequities, disparate sentencing

TABLE 3 --- INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING ON ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM

IRE NO	DATE	MEDIA/LOCATION	TOPIC/ISSUE
10408	July/Aug. 1994	The Humanist	environmental racism
10077	Jan/Feb. 1994	E Magazine (Norwalk, CT)	Cherokees shut down unsafe nuclear plant
9702	May-Dec. 1993	Dallas Morning News	govt. forces blacks into toxic dump ghetto
8847	Sept. 21, 1992.	National Law Journal (NY)	environmental racism and the EPA
8695	May/June 1992	E Magazine	minority areas targeted for toxic dumps
8699	Spring 1992	Covert Action	toxic waste disposal on Native American lands
8637	Nov. 17-21, 1991	St. Louis Post-Dispatch	federal govt. polluted American Indian lands
8010	April 1991	The Crisis	hazardous waste in minority neighborhoods
7411	June 1990	The Chicago Reporter	illegal garbage dumping in city's black wards

TABLE 4 --- INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING ON REDLINING

IRE NO	DATE	MEDIA/LOCATION	TOPIC/ISSUE
10519	Feb. 27, 1994	Hartford Courant	minoritiy mortgages twice as likely rejected
10424	May 29, 1994	Santa Rosa Press Democrat	redlining of high-income minorities
9742	Dec.5, 1993	Cable News Network	insurance company won't cover blacks
9909	Nov.14, 1993	Anchorage Daily News	redlining Native Americans
9965	Apr.25, 1993	St. Paul Pioneer Press	Twin city blacks can't get mortgages
9936	June 6-8, 1993	Washington Post	no improvement in lending to minorities
10133	Sep.12, 1993	Tribune-Review (Grnsbrg, PA)	bias in banking system
9705	Jan.& May, 1993	Chicago Reporter	redlining
9510	Aug. 8, 1993	News & Record (Grnsboro, NC)	redlining
9555	Nov. 30, 1992	Wall Street Journal	redlining
9389	July 5-6, 1992	Evansville Courier (Ind.)	redlining
8573	Nov. 30, 1992	Wall Street Journal	blacks and loans in largest cities
8334	May 14-17, 1991	WHDH-TV Boston	redlining on second mortgages
7329	Sep. 9-11, 1990	The Oregonian	redlining is common
6599	Aug. 20-23, 1989	Birmingham News	Alabama mortgage problems
6557	Sep. 11-12, 1989	Boston Herald	discrimination in rental
7162	Oct. 29, 1989	Kansas City Star	redlining studied in 59 cities
7939	Aug. 1988	Detroit Free Press	redlining
5788	July 24-27, 1988	Detroit Free Press	redlining
4705	May 1-4, 1988	Atlanta Journal-Constitution	redlining Atlanta's middle-income blacks
4662	July 20, 1987	Atlanta Journal	blacks barred from buying property
267	May, 1984	Knickerbocker News (Albany)	insurance redlining
702	June 22-26, 1980	Chicago Tribune	black community pays more but gets less
408	Feb. 1979	Evening Independent (FL)	real estate steering segregates city
114	Nov. 1976	Los Angeles Magazine	redlining & speculation in poor areas
151	July, 1975	Kansas City Star	redlining in inner-city neighborhoods
------	April 17, 1995	U.S. News & World Report	new redlining; minorities still shortchanged
-------	Nov. 15, 1992	CBS - 60 Minutes	minority homeowners pay higher interest

A Defining Moment:
Who says What about Public Journalism

by Sally McMillan, Macy Guppy, Bill Kunz and Raul Reis
University of Oregon

Prepared for the Civic Journalism Interest Group

Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication
Annual Convention, August 9-13, 1996
Anaheim, California

Direct correspondence to first-named author at:
920 Marquet Way
Eugene, OR 97401

Phone: 541-341-3977
Fax: 541-346-0682
e-mail: sjm@darkwing.uoregon.edu

Abstract:

Public journalism is based on ancient principles, but as a movement it is at a defining moment. This paper examines key players who are defining public journalism and examines metaphors and oppositions central to those definitions. Three primary constructs emerge: public journalism as a changed news gathering and reporting practice, public journalism as civic activism, and public journalism as a financial boon to the sagging bottom line of news organizations that have lost audience share.

Discussions of public or civic journalism have appeared in newspapers and trade journals since the early 1990s. It has been called a "movement toward a basic cultural change," one that could rekindle the democratic process in the United States.[1] Proponents of public journalism portray it as a revived relationship between news organizations and the public. Critics, however, dismiss it as the usual tasks of newspaper promotion departments, "only with a different kind of name and a fancy, evangelistic fervor."[2] Examination of both trade and academic literature reveals a need for a better understanding of power relationships in organizations that are defining public journalism and for a detailed analysis of key elements of the discourse about public journalism.

Historical and Philosophical Underpinnings

To those who view public journalism as something new and unique, the birth of the movement is often identified with *The Wichita Eagle*'s coverage of the 1990 Kansas gubernatorial campaign.[3] Davis "Buzz" Merritt, Jr., one of the architects of the *Eagle*'s "The Voter Project: Your Vote Counts" project, speaks of journalists "helping public life go well," and indicates journalists should bring to the arena of public life the "ability and willingness to provide relevant information and a place for that information to be discussed and turned into democratic consent."[4] That vision is not new. The notion that media must provide information that serves as the cornerstone of a representative democracy is older than the United States.

The ideals of American journalism are an outgrowth of the Age of Reason and the liberal political tradition reflected in the writings of John Milton, John Locke, John Stuart Mill, and others. Milton is credited with originating the notion of the "marketplace of ideas" in 1644 when he spoke of the grappling between truth and falsehood in a "free and open encounter."[5] He defended the faith of intellectual liberalism, arguing that "truth will prevail over error when both may be freely tested by investigation and discussion."[6]

Milton's self-righting principle became one of the cornerstones of American democratic theory. Thomas Jefferson endorsed that notion when he authored a bill to establish religious freedom in Virginia in 1779, declaring that "truth is great and will prevail if left to herself, that she is the proper and sufficient antagonist to error and has nothing to fear from the conflict unless by human interposition disarmed of her natural weapons, free argument and debate."[7] Some argue that democracy thrives in the United States, in part, because of information made available by the media.[8]

The philosophical foundation of public journalism, therefore, appears to be a revival of ideas that have been in place for centuries. The premise that the ideas have been in place, however, does not mean that they have been practiced. Carey suggests that the practices of the press have not facilitated a free exchange of ideas, but have instead stressed a detachment process in which "the public was conceptually evacuated."[9] He presents evidence that the process started as early as the 1920s and has grown continually worse.

The 1920s saw the emergence and consolidation of some of the most important and long-lasting theories of the press and of modern democratic society. Two notable examples are the works of John Dewey and Walter Lippmann. Peters observes that the concept of democracy is so much intertwined and associated with the media and with media theory that "the political concern for democracy is thus not only a *topic* of discourse in American mass communication theory; it is part of the *structure* of that discourse."[10]

Dewey's concept of social life, Peters says, is one "that links together an understanding of the self, communication, community life, and democracy."[11] In 1927 Dewey wrote about interactions and transactions that have shaped society into something more complex than a living organism. "Interactions, transactions occur *de facto* and the results of interdependence follow. But participation in activities and sharing in results are additive concerns. They demand communication as a prerequisite."[12]

Peters says that Lippmann presented a counterpoint to Dewey's notion of communication as the ultimate tool for facilitating community engagement in democratic life.

> Instead of Dewey's notion of intelligence, he [Lippmann] worried about the facts; instead of democracy as an ethical ideal, he treated it as solely a form of government; instead of self-realization, the citizen's duty was to gain information about public issues; . . . instead of symbols as the bond of community, they were the emotion-ridden evils of mass manipulation; . . . instead of the constitution of a malleable yet resistant reality by collective deliberation, politics centered on gaining accurate pictures of a world outside that was fixed once and for all.[13]

In the past seventy years, the American political system has consolidated Lippmann's notion of technocratic expertise while rejecting Dewey's notions of organic involvement. The public journalism movement has rediscovered Dewey. Jay Rosen, one of the public journalism movement's main theorists, has utilized Dewey's definitions of democracy and the role of communication in a democratic society to justify public journalism's drive into community activism. Rosen utilizes concepts drawn from Dewey's writings to define democratic politics as the "struggle to arrive at public truths through public discussion."[14]

Hallin also builds on concepts of engagement as he seeks to find a balance between the role of the citizen and news media in revitalizing citizen participation in public discussion. He believes that journalists can facilitate change, but that they must reconceptualize their place in the political debate.

> Journalists need to move from conceiving their role in terms of mediating between political authorities and the mass public, to thinking of it also as a task of opening up political discussions in civil society. . . . If the candidates in an election campaign, for instance, don't seem to have much to say, why not look for someone else who does?[15]

Hallin's argument suggests that a fundamental change in political coverage would extend the range of voices that are heard so that average citizens can become engaged in the political process. Reliance on elite sources, however, could be difficult to change. Michael Schudson has argued that "The story of journalism, on a day-to-day basis, is the story of the interaction of reporters and officials."[16] Reliance on official sources is not limited to elite media outlets. Stavitsky and Gleason found that even "alternative" news organizations such as National Public Radio and Pacifica Radio relied heavily on official news sources.[17]

Hallin believes it is time for journalists to "rejoin civil society and to start talking to their readers and viewers as one citizen to another, rather than as experts claiming to be above politics."[18] While Hallin believes change is possible, he questions whether the economic environment in which media function could prove to be an insurmountable obstacle.

Other economic factors could also influence public journalism in different ways. Marx believed that the defining characteristic of the industrial order was the possession of the means of production in the hands of the capitalist class, which also afforded it control over the means of mental production. With the institutions of political debate and interpretation weakened, and the presidency and political parties losing credibility, one could question whether public journalism is simply a new mechanism of mental production. In this view, public journalism could be seen as allowing an elite class to maintain its influence over social and economic change and political debate. The debate over corporations and alleged separation of ownership and control is also valuable in this context because the influence of Gannett and Knight-Ridder, two large communication conglomerates, is at the heart of the public journalism movement.

Economic and Power Structure Analysis

To gain a better understanding of how economic factors may be driving the public journalism movement, we compiled a list of newspapers that have adopted public journalism. The list was drawn from two key sources: a report issued by the Project on Public Life and the Press[19] and an advertisement on Gannett's News 2000 program.[20]

After eliminating duplication in the two lists, 62 newspapers were identified in this sample as participants in public journalism programs. Forty of those newspapers, 64.5 percent, suffered average daily circulation losses between 1980 and 1990.[21] As noted above, the rise of public journalism came at the end of this decade of decline. During the 1980s, 22 of the newspapers in this sample experienced a growth in average daily circulation, but only 12 of them experienced increases greater than 10 percent over the 10-year period. Moreover, a number of newspapers in the sample experienced an increase in average daily circulation that was well below the growth rate of the primary market served by the newspaper. For example, the average daily circulation of *The Burlington Free Press* increased 11.4 percent between 1980 and 1990, but its primary market grew by 352 percent.[22]

The two newspaper groups most strongly represented in this sample are Gannett and Knight-Ridder. The following section analyzes these two chains as well as two non-profit organizations that have been instrumental in defining public journalism: The Project on Public Life and the Press and The Pew Charitable Trust.

Gannett and Knight-Ridder

Gannett and Knight-Ridder are the two largest newspaper groups in the United States, but there are important differences between the corporations and the public journalism projects their newspapers have undertaken. The most fundamental difference is that Gannett is a more diversified media corporation, with 92 daily newspapers, more than 50 non-daily publications, 15 television stations, 13 major-market radio stations, and the largest outdoor advertising group in America.[23] Knight-Ridder, on the other hand, divested its television division in 1988, and now focuses on its newspaper division, which includes 32 daily newspapers, as well as business information services that distribute business, science and other information for business and professional use.[24]

Return on Investment

Differences between Gannett and Knight-Ridder become important in an economic environment in which the financial growth of newspapers has been quite limited. For example, the 10-year compound growth of the Knight-Ridder newspaper division's operating revenue was just 3.5 percent through 1994, while the growth of its business information services in that same period was 22.6 percent. There are also significant differences in the performance of their newspaper divisions. Newspaper advertising revenues at Knight-Ridder increased 27.5 percent between 1985 and 1990, and 1.7 percent between 1990 and 1994.[25] This compares to increases of 57.9 percent and 12.3 percent for Gannett in the same time periods.

The performance of Gannett and Knight-Ridder common stock, in comparison with the Standard & Poors Publishing & Newspaper Index, can be found in Table 1. The data indicates that the performance of Knight-Ridder stock has been well below the relevant indexes, which is not insignificant for a publicly-held company. Gannett, on the other hand, has outperformed the S&P Publishing and Newspaper Index, and is not far behind the S&P 500 Index.

TABLE 1

COMPARISON OF FIVE YEAR CUMULATIVE TOTAL RETURNS[26]

Year	Gannett	Knight-Ridder	S&P Publishing & Newspaper Index[27]	S&P 500 Index[28]
1989	$100.00	$100.00	$100.00	$100.00
1990	$85.88	$80.74	$80.14	$96.89
1991	$111.44	$95.91	$97.04	$126.42
1992	$127.70	$107.73	$108.51	$136.05
1993	$147.72	$113.76	$125.68	$149.76
1994	$141.07	$98.84	$116.11	$151.74

One can draw various conclusions from this data. While comparative growth rates of newspaper advertising revenue may be one reason Gannett's common stock has out-performed Knight-Ridder, another could be that the latter invests more in its product. Bryan Gurley, a reporter for a Gannett newspaper, the *Detroit News*, provides a common perception of the two chains: "Knight-Ridder was widely admired for running big-city papers that dominated the annual awarding of the coveted Pulitzer Prize. Meanwhile, Gannett took the prize for making money."[29] Gurley focused on Allen Neuharth, former board chairman of Gannett, whom he credited with building a "vast network of cash-rich dailies . . . Gannett was bold and self-indulgent, a glitzy parvenu of the modern publishing elite."[30]

Analysis of Leadership

While Allen Neuharth is a suitable focus in documenting the rise of Gannett, the late James Batten might be equally important for a discussion of the evolution of public journalism. Batten was named the chief executive officer of Knight-Ridder in 1988, and became the chairman of the board in 1989, one year before the *Wichita Eagle*, a Knight-Ridder newspaper, launched its public journalism project. Some credit him with planting the seed of public journalism in a speech in the summer of 1988, and he was a vocal advocate of the movement within the Knight-Ridder chain.

Batten believed that for reasons both "idealistic and pragmatic, newspapers have an urgent obligation to find better ways to draw people into greater involvement with the communities -- and with important issues facing those communities."[31] With his vision of public journalism and effective control of Knight-Ridder, he may have provided direction that helped shape public journalism projects funded by Knight-Ridder.

Patterns of ownership and control of Knight-Ridder and Gannett are quite different. The board of directors and executives of Knight-Ridder own 13.2 percent of the common stock. This includes the stock owned by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, for which Knight-Ridder board members Batten and Alvah Chapman, both former chief executive officers of the corporation, held voting rights.[32] Chapman is also connected through a directorship with the Northern Trust Company, which owns 9.5 percent of Knight-Rider, making it the largest single shareholder.

Percentage of common stock owned by directors and executives does not include what is reported to be a considerable number of shares dispersed among the Knight family. It is difficult to know exact number of shares, because no member of the family is a member of the board of directors and no individual owns more than 5 percent of outstanding shares of stock, which would require ownership to be reported with the federal government. Concentration of ownership within Knight-Ridder is most evident when compared with Gannett, where no member of the board of directors or executive owns more than .01 of 1 percent of the outstanding shares, and the directors and executives as a group own less than 1 percent.[33]

The ownership of stock suggests where power and control reside with a corporation. But it is also important to place directors and executives within the political, economic, and social power structures in the United States. One approach to this question is to examine interlocking directorates among members of boards of directors and executives.

The literature on interlocking directorates suggests that these connections are relationships between corporations with directors serving as agents in these relationships.[34] Peter Drier argues that "Organizations seek such ties in pursuit of their interests. Indeed, there is evidence that different interlocks perform different functions, including access to general information about corporations' environments, specific information about corporate plans and procedures, and explicit coordination between interlocked firms."[35]

Drier predicted that media elites would become more integrated into the "web of affiliations that form the national power structure" as media corporations became large, diversified enterprises.[36] The data in Table 2, which combines the results of Drier's research from 1979 with current information, suggests that in the case of Knight-Ridder that prediction has been realized. There has been a shift on the Knight-Ridder board from inside to outside directors and an increase in the number of interlocks with major corporations, including 11 that ranked amount the 200 largest institutions in the United States as of 1994. A number of those corporations, including Phillips Petroleum (oil), The Raytheon Company (military), and Duke Power Company (nuclear power), are operating in what Graham Murdock has called socially and politically contentious areas.[37] In the case of Gannett, however, there has been a decrease in the number of board members, as well as reductions in the number of interlocks and affiliations with the major U.S. corporations.

TABLE 2

ELITE AFFILIATIONS OF GANNETT AND KNIGHT-RIDDER[38]

	Gannett 1979	Gannett 1995	Knight-Ridder 1979	Knight-Ridder 1995
No. of Inside Directors	14	6	14	6
(No. of Affiliations)	(5)	(6)	(14)	(3)
No. of Outside Directors	7	6	4	9
(No. of Affiliations)	(25)	(17)	(15)	(28)
Fortune Interlocks	17	14	12	19

Knight-Ridder and Gannett have utilized directorships to enhance connections to the federal government through the appointment of former high-level government officials. Clark

Clifford, one of the long-time members of the Knight-Ridder board of directors, held various posts in the administrations of Franklin Roosevelt, Harry Truman, and John Kennedy before serving as Secretary of Defense under Lyndon Johnson. Clifford assumed a prominent role in Knight-Ridder's protracted battle in the 1980s to obtain federal approval for a joint operating agency between the *Detroit Free Press* and the *Detroit News*, which was owned by Gannett.[39]

Neuharth also knew the value of placing Washington insiders on a corporate board as evidenced in his comments about the benefits of placing William Rogers, former Secretary of State under Richard Nixon, on the Gannett board:

> (William) Bill Rogers is in a position to make major contributions to Gannett in its dealings with government, on anti-trust matters, with the FCC (Federal Communications Commission), whatever. He's been on the inside and can help top management understand what can be done and what can't be done.[40]

The Role of Foundations

In addition to the corporate influence of both Gannett and Knight-Ridder, foundations have also played an important role in shaping public journalism. Both of these powerful newspaper chains have ties to foundations. The role of those foundations in spearheading public journalism are analyzed below. In addition, the Pew Charitable Trusts, a non-media based foundation, has also played a formative role in the public journalism movement.

Gannett's Foundation Ties

The Gannett Foundation, which was founded by Frank Gannett in 1935, severed all ties with the corporation in 1991 when it sold 15.9 million shares of Gannett stock back to the corporation for $670 million. Gannett stock had been the foundation's lone asset, but the dividends it received from that stock were not sufficient to meet a federal requirement that foundations pay out 5 percent of their assets each year. Among the conditions of the stock purchase was that interlocking directorates were eliminated and that the foundation dropped the Gannett name, which occurred on July 4, 1991, when it became The Freedom Forum.

This separation has numerous implications for public journalism. On a philosophical level, the Gannett program lacks the depth that scholars can bring to the table through the funding and support of a non-profit organization. The implications are more profound on a practical level. The Gannett Foundation had made annual allocations to all the newspapers and television and radio stations within the Gannett organization to fund local programs.[41] While some support for local initiatives is still available, such programs must meet the new criteria of The Freedom Forum, which changed the foundation's basic mission to focus on First Amendment issues in the United States and freedom of speech issues around the world.

Knight-Ridder and the Project on Public Life and the Press

In contrast to Gannett, Knight-Ridder has maintained close ties to the Knight Foundation. One of the most significant public journalism activities of the Knight Foundation has been its support for the Project on Public Life and the Press which is located at New York University and operated by Jay Rosen. The project's Fall 1994 progress report enumerates public journalism activities of 35 organizations; 42 percent are papers owned by Knight-Ridder. Rosen frequently references the *Charlotte Observer* and *Wichita Eagle* as pioneers in public journalism; both papers are owned by Knight-Ridder. The project clearly has ties to both the Knight-Ridder chain of newspapers and the Knight Foundation.

Batten was one of two individuals who, until his recent death, held memberships on both corporate and foundation boards. The foundation was established in 1950 and has current assets of $761 million. The activities of the foundation increased substantially in the 1980s. John S. Knight died in 1981 and left most of his holdings in Knight-Ridder to the foundation.

His brother, James L. Knight, died in 1991 and his estate expanded the foundation's fund by $170 million. Foundation grants in 1993 exceeded $32 million.

The Knight Foundation makes contributions in four areas: community initiatives, journalism, education, and arts and culture. The journalism program is national in scope. Grants are made to organizations that offer promise of advancing quality and effectiveness of a free press in the United States and world wide.

The Project on Public Life and the Press is funded through the journalism area of Knight Foundation contributions. The foundation gave $500,00 to fund the Project on Public Life and the Press in both 1993 and 1995.[42] The Knight Foundation has worked in concert with other grant-making organizations to fund the Project on Public Life and the Press. Most notably, the Kettering Foundation, a think tank in Dayton, Ohio, is credited as the "incubator of the idea" of public journalism.[43] Kettering linked Rosen with the Knight Foundation and it has consistently provided scholarly forums for discussion of the place of journalism in public life.[44]

The Pew Charitable Trusts

The Pew Charitable Trusts have made significant contributions to public journalism projects. However, unlike the Knight-Ridder Foundation, Pew has no direct relationships with the news business. The trusts were established between 1948 and 1979 by two sons and two daughters of Joseph N. Pew, founder of the Sun Oil Co., and his wife, Mary Anderson Pew.

Civic journalism projects are part of a program titled "civic engagement," which is defined in the foundation's 1994 annual report as follows:

> The Trusts remain deeply concerned about the cynicism that threatens to erode our nation's social and cultural fabric. We recognize that solutions . . . can only be realized and sustained with a more engaged citizenry. To increase civic participation in community problem solving, the Trusts have been working in partnerships with various print and broadcast media alliances.[45]

Table 3 lists organizations that have been identified in the literature as recipients of funds from the Pew Charitable Trusts in support of civic journalism projects. Recipients are listed in alphabetical order by ownership.

TABLE 3
NEWS ORGANIZATIONS THAT HAVE RECEIVED GIFTS FROM
THE PEW CHARITABLE TRUSTS IN SUPPORT OF CIVIC JOURNALISM

Organization	Location	Ownership/Affiliation
WSOC-TV	Charlotte, NC	ABC/Cox
WISC-TV	Madison, WI	CBS/Chronicle Broadcasting
Seattle Times	Seattle, WA	Independent
San Francisco Chronicle	San Francisco, CA	Independent
Dallas Morning News	Dallas, TX	Independent
WPEG - FM	Charlotte, NC	Independent/Broadcasting Partners
Wichita Eagle	Wichita, KS	Knight-Ridder
Charlotte Observer	Charlotte, NC	Knight-Ridder
Akron Beacon Journal	Akron, OH	Knight-Ridder
Tallahassee Democrat	Tallahassee, FL	Knight-Ridder
Wisconsin State Journal	Madison, WI	Lee Enterprises
WBZ-TV	Boston, MA	NBC
KRON-TV	San Francisco, CA	NBC/Chronicle Broadcasting
Boston Globe	Boston, MA	New York Times Corp./Globe Newspaper Co.
WBUR	Boston, MA	NPR
KUOW-FM	Seattle, WA	NPR
KPLU - FM	Tacoma, WA	NPR
KERA-FM	Dallas, TX	NPR
KMUW-FM	Wichita, KS	NPR
WHA-TV	Madison, WI	PBS
KQED	San Francisco, CA	PBS
KERA-TV	Dallas, TX	PBS
WBAV - AM	Charlotte, NC	Satellite Music Network/Broadcasting Partners

The Pew Charitable Trusts contribute funds to a broad-based group of news organizations. However, it is interesting that 17.4 percent of the supported news organizations identified in Table 3 are owned by Knight-Ridder and none are owned by Gannett. This may suggest that Gannett's News 2000 program stands outside of the mainstream of the public journalism movement.

The Pew Charitable Trusts also fully fund a grant-making organization, the Pew Center for Civic Journalism. The center is headed by Ed Fouhy, a former network executive, and has received $4.5 million from the Pew Charitable Trusts to help newspapers and broadcast stations develop civic journalism projects.[46] Further evidence of a growing bond between Knight-Ridder and the Pew Charitable Trusts is the recent Pew Center for Civic Journalism creation of a $25,000 Award for Excellence in Civic Journalism named for the late James K. Batten. The award is given annually in support of a news organization that is furthering the civic journalism movement.[47]

Summary of Economic and Power Structure Analysis

Declines in circulation and return on investment throughout the 1980s is evident. Two news organizations that have been impacted by this decline have taken an active role in promoting public journalism. This brief analysis of the sources that have funded and promoted public journalism activities suggests that these financial motivations may be embedded deeply in the power structure of American society.

While much of the literature on public journalism focuses on democratic ideals, many writers also acknowledge the importance of declining readership and income as factors in the development of public journalism. For those who view democratic ideas as primary, financial concerns are seen as a symptom of that problem. For example, a 1989 Knight-Ridder symposium noted that voter participation in the 1988 election was the lowest for any presidential election since 1924. The report juxtaposes this fact with observation that nation-wide newspaper readership has declined from 73 percent of adults in 1967 to 51 percent in 1988 and suggests that changes in the ways newspapers cover the political process might reinvigorate both voter participation and circulation.[48] Moreover, Rosen often cites political philosopher Michael Sandel to frame the base of public journalism: "When politics goes well, we can know a good in common that we cannot know alone."[49]

Rosen, a leading scholar who generally approaches the need for public journalism from the perspective of rebuilding democracy, also acknowledges that the financial climate was a significant force in encouraging journalists to re-evaluate the news product.[50]

But in some of the literature, financial concerns are primary and a change in content is presented as a way to directly address the problem of declining readership. For example, Gannett's News 2000 program starts from the premise that "All newspapers today are confronting changing reader preferences as they attempt to rebuild readership and circulation penetration."[51] William Woo also sees financial concerns as one of the primary reasons that newspapers adopted public journalism in the early 1990s. He connects decline in readership directly to decline in advertising income. He notes advertising revenue for newspapers in 1994 was lower than 1989 revenue even though the economy grew significantly in that period.[52]

In summary, during the late 1980s and early 1990s the trade press identified two problems facing newspapers: lack of citizen participation in public life and a decline in the financial base of the media. Rosen argues that both of these concerns can be effectively addressed by the movement which has come to be known as public, or civic, journalism.[53] However, as we shall explore in the next section, both philosophical and operational definitions of public journalism are still evolving.

Defining Public Journalism

If public journalism is viewed as either an indicator of or a catalyst for change within journalism, it is important to look at the definitions and language used to portray it. Rosen notes that public journalism is currently a "minority impulse, rooted primarily in the regional press."[54] However, it is being debated widely and an increasing number of public journalism experiments are being funded by groups such as the aforementioned foundations. Discourse on public journalism has entered into the rhetoric of professional journalism.

At this early point in its development, it is appropriate to analyze how public journalism is being defined and by whom in order to see how meaning is being constructed and exchanged. This research attempts to flesh out the meaning of public journalism through analysis of available texts on the subject. These texts were identified in several ways. A search for the terms "public journalism" and "civic journalism" was conducted in dissertation abstracts, Nexis/Lexis, and the Expanded Periodical Index. Materials were obtained from the Project on Public Life and the Press, the Pew Center for Public Journalism, and Gannett Corporation's News 2000 program. In 1995 and early 1996, a variety of published texts, online resources, and videotapes on public journalism became available.[55] These materials were reviewed as well. Finally, an additional body of literature was identified through the citations found in above-mentioned materials and through the serendipity of finding texts that relate to public journalism in both the popular and trade press.

Textual analysis can be used to understand how public journalism is defined. Shah defines textual analysis as: "a research technique that yields a rich and deep sense of media messages and an understanding of the context in which they are produced."[56] Textual analysis relies heavily on a semiotic approach to studying the social production of meaning from sign systems. Semiotics includes, in part, the concepts of denotative and connotative meanings and connotation's relationship to metaphor -- all of which are used in this study.

Textual analysis of media messages, sometimes known as media analysis, rejects the idea that meanings of language simply reflect reality. Instead, media analysis sees meaning as the product of specific, socially determined practices of signification.[57] Roland Barthes set up the first systematic model to analyze the negotiated, interactive character of meaning.

Denotation is the first order of signification. It describes the relationship between the signifier and signified within the sign, and of the sign with its referent in external reality. This refers to the "common-sense, obvious meaning of the sign," otherwise known as syntagmatic organization.[58] In this research, our syntagmatic analysis of meaning comes from finding explicit definitions of the terms "public journalism" or "civic journalism" in the texts.

Connotation is the second order of signification. Barthes uses connotation to describe the interaction that occurs when the sign meets the feelings or emotions of the users and the values of their cultures. Connotation is largely arbitrary and specific to one culture; it tends to work metaphorically. Beyond their function as literary devices, metaphors are also part of the way we make sense of our everyday experience.[59] This common sense use of metaphor appears as natural, but is always constructed from societal conventions. For example, numerous sports metaphors were evident in the texts surveyed, calling up cultural norms and conventions around its active, competitive nature.

In addition to seeking denotative and connotative meanings and associated metaphors, we also looked for evidence of opposition in the texts. Levi-Strauss posited that the essence of sense-making is constructing conceptual categories within a system through binary opposition. According to Saussurian linguistics, meaning is generated by opposition; signs or words take their meaning in opposition to others. Ambiguities, although produced by binary logic, are considered an offense to binaries.[60] We looked for oppositional language in this study because it focuses on perceived differences between various public journalism players -- those who identify with traditional journalism and oppose public journalism -- as well as the various differences within public journalism as implied in our earlier analysis of major newspaper chains and foundations that are helping to structure the public journalism movement.

Explicit Definitions

Explicit definitions of public journalism can be grouped into two primary categories: those that define it philosophically, and those that define its practices.

Defining Public Journalism as Philosophy

Merritt offers a succinct statement of the mission of public journalism: "helping public life go well."[61] He also stresses that "public journalism is not a formula; it is a philosophy."[62] Rosen sees the core philosophy of public journalism as recognition of the "overriding importance of improving public life."[63] The political process is frequently central to discussions of public journalism and public life. But public journalism also extends to other aspects of public life, such as race relations, children's needs, and economic development. In some public journalism environments, the term "public life" has evolved to mean anything and everything people do to have an impact on their communities.[64]

Three factors emerge as central elements of the philosophy of improvement of public life: news organizations, citizens, and the nature of the relationship between news organizations and citizens.

News Organizations

Many advocates of public journalism call for radical change in news organizations. Some specifics of that change are outlined in the next section on public journalism as practice. At the philosophical level, public journalism is about fundamental cultural change in journalism. Merritt suggests journalistic detachment and objectivity must give way to guarded activism. "Public journalism stakes out a middle ground that retains neutrality on specifics while moving far enough beyond detachment to care about whether resolution occurs."[65]

Rosen says public journalism looks for what aspects of public life have been "left out, neglected, or not allowed to shine in the busy environment of the American newsroom."[66] Journalists need to recognize their role in defining the story of public life. Glaberson sees th journalistic self-examination as leading to a new kind of news coverage that reflects the greater complexity of issues.[67]

Citizens

Public journalism also recognizes citizens as central to the process of revitalizing public life. Some of the literature on public journalism takes a paternalistic perspective on citizens. Definitions of public journalism sometimes portray citizens as passive, uninformed, and in need of news organizations that will inform them and engage them in public life.[68]

Others envision citizens as empowered. Rosen sees citizens as central "actors and discussants" in public life.[69] He portrays public journalism as strengthening "the community's capacity to recognize itself, converse well, and make choices."[70] He also refutes traditional journalism's view of journalists always functioning as observers and never as actors.[71] Fouhy also focuses on the importance of conversation among citizens. He defines public journalism as "a deliberate attempt to reach out to citizens, to listen to them, and to have citizens listen and talk to each other."[72] Shepard suggests that this citizen-centered perspective of public journalism is about:

> asking readers to help decide what the paper covers and how it covers it; becoming a more active player and less an observer; lobbying for change on the news pages; finding sources whose voices are often unheard; and, above all, dramatically strengthening the bonds between newspaper and community.[73]

Relationship

Shepard's emphasis on building bonds between newspapers and communities is reflected in much of the public journalism literature. Woo sees public journalism as "journalism that is attached, that connects press and politics, news product and business function, journalists and the community."[74] Rosen defines public journalism as the "undeveloped art of attachment to the community in which journalists work."[75] And Miller sees public journalism as a tool for closing the "gap between the values of journalism and the needs of the community."[76]

Not all observers of public journalism view this new relationship between journalists and citizens as a positive development. Richard Aregood of the *Philadelphia Daily News* believes newspapers are doing themselves a disservice to let outsiders set their agendas.[77] Other critics see public journalism as "unethical because it forces newspapers across the lines into active involvement in problem-solving rather than detached reporting on issues."[78]

Defining Public Journalism as Practice

A significant body of literature focuses on the specific practices of public journalism.[79] In much of this literature, public journalism is represented as a shift from the traditional journalistic practice of detachment (or objectivity) to one of engagement with the public on public issues. Rosen suggests objectivity is no longer a viable contract between journalists and public.[80] He proposes that in place of the ritual of objectivity, both the media and the public are recognizing the need for a new kind of journalism: "Traditionally, journalists worry about getting the separations right. . . . Getting the connections right is our problem now."[81]

In addition to questioning the viability of objectivity, public journalism also challenges other practices of the media profession. Among the reported changes to journalistic practice are greater reliance on locally-generated (as opposed to wire service or syndicate) stories;[82] use of graphic devices to call attention to content that relates to public life;[83] and greater focus on issues rather than processes, particularly in political campaigns where traditional coverage has focused on the "horse race" and/or the character of candidates.[84]

Public journalism focuses on the citizen as the source of both the agenda and the content of the news story.[85] Implementation of this citizen-centered model can take the form of focus groups, citizen advisory panels, in-depth interviews, and issue-based surveys and polls. Citizen input is used to shape the agenda of topics to be covered in the news pages. Citizens' evaluation of public issues is reported and respected equally with that of the "professionals" in public life (e.g., government officials, political consultants, etc.).[86]

Some public journalism literature suggests that media organizations should go beyond reporting and begin facilitating public life programs. This mobilizing function may be as simple as inclusion of specific information that enables a citizen to take action (e.g., date, time, and place for public hearings).[87] In other cases, news organizations take activist roles.

For example, the *Detroit Free Press* established a public journalism project focused on children's issues. In addition to citizen-based, in-depth stories, the newspaper also sponsored a fund-raising campaign for a summer recreation program, convened a forum of citizens and leaders to address violence against children, and established a policy that allowed newspaper staff to volunteer up to two hours of work time each week in schools.[88]

Implicit Definitions

Implicit definitions of public journalism are analyzed in terms of two factors: use of metaphor and other literary devices, and use of opposition in defining public journalism.

Metaphor and Other Literary Devices

Metaphor and other literary devices are used extensively in the public journalism literature. Several recurring literary devices are worthy of exploration: the quest, religion, reformation and reform, health, sports, and "creation" references as embodied in terms such as invention, construction, and repair.

The Quest

Students of mythology recognize the meta-myth of the quest as a story that reappears in all cultures and times. Joseph Campbell defines the quest as follows:

> You leave the world that you're in and go into a depth or into a distance or up to a height. There you come to what was missing in your consciousness in the world you formerly inhabited. Then comes the problem either of staying with that, and letting the world drop off, or returning with that boon and trying to hold on to it as you move back into your social world again.[89]

Given the centrality of the quest myth, it is not surprising that images of the quest imbue the literature on public journalism. Some of these references are implicit in the description of the process of seeking out a new way to engage news organizations and citizens.

Some references are more explicit. Rosen recognizes the myth-like quality of public journalism by suggesting that "public journalism is about shaping a master narrative."[90] He defines public journalism as the "quest for better truths."[91] Even critics recognize the mythic nature of public journalism by defining it as a "quest for a better tomorrow."[92]

Religion

Allusions to religious themes occur frequently in the literature. One text that is illustrative of this religious motif is an article titled "The Gospel of Public Journalism." This text defines public journalism as the "hottest secular religion in the news business."[93]

Woo also focuses on religious themes in his monograph titled *When Old Gods Falter*. Among the religious themes in this piece are references to David Broder as a kind of John the Baptist for public journalism, Jay Rosen as the Apostle Paul of the movement, and identification of public journalism activists as evangelists, zealots, and prophets.[94]

In addition to these explicit religious references, some of the literature on public journalism makes less obvious allusions. For example, Fouhy draws on Christian visions of a second advent by defining public journalism as a trend that is "too small to be a movement, it's so far a cloud no bigger than a man's hand."[95] Woo is quoted as comparing the shift to a new positive role for journalists in community affairs as "the lamb lying down with the lions."[96]

Revolution and Reform

Religious metaphors carry over into the concept of reformation. For example, Frankel invokes images of the Protestant reformation in his invocation to "leave reform to the reformers."[97] Use of the terms "revolution" and "reform" are a site of contention within journalism practice and academia.

Tom Field, editor of a New Mexico newspaper, notes that some journalists hail public journalism as a revolution and others oppose use of that term. Field believes that public journalism "isn't a revolution; it's supposed to be on our job description."[98] Everette Dennis also calls the revolutionary nature of public journalism into question. He notes that some see public journalism as a "radical departure" from traditional journalistic practice, while others see it as nothing new.[99]

Sports

Sports metaphors appear frequently. Both Merritt and Batten use the analogy of a referee to describe the role of the public journalists. Fouhy quotes Batten's call to journalists to "come down out of the press box and get on the field, not as players, but as referees."[100] Glaberson suggests that "journalism is a game about nothing more than winning and losing"[101] and Fouhy contends that "civic journalism is not just an insider game."[102]

Health

Rosen draws parallels between holistic medicine and public journalism. He suggests public journalism reverses the tradition of "emergency room" journalism with new practices that establish conditions that allow a healthy public life. Public journalism, like holistic medicine, starts from a position of maintaining wellness rather than treating sickness.[103]

The *Virginia Pilot and Ledger Star* centralized the health metaphor in its public journalism mission statement: "We will revitalize a democracy that has grown sick with disenchantment."[104] John Bare suggests "America's big cities and their daily newspapers fell ill at the same time." He sees public journalism as the antidote for traditional journalism which had threatened the health of both journalistic jobs and communities.[105] Case extends the metaphor by suggesting that proponents of public journalism believe it "addresses the issues that plague public life."[106] And Winship uses the term "steroid for the press" to describe his view of the need to strengthen and refurbish journalism.[107]

The heart is central to the health metaphor. For example, the Pew Center for Civic Journalism is sponsored under the Pew Foundation's "Renewing our Democratic Heart" program.[108] Gannett suggests that public journalism is "at the heart of Gannett journalism."[109]

Creation

The "creation" metaphor is displayed in comparisons between public journalism and concepts such as invention, construction, and repair. Rosen is quoted as saying "we're still inventing" public journalism.[110] And Bhatia defines public journalism as "an experimental movement."[111] This metaphor also appears in references to newspapers "building" new kinds of news coverage[112] and helping communities "build" the capacity to solve problems.[113]

Some literature focuses on the "brokenness" of existing systems. Stewart suggests that public journalism goes beyond "telling readers that institutions are broken; it educates, entertains and informs just like good stories should, and drives home the point that readers can help fix what's broken."[114] But, Frankel warns that "fix-it" public journalism is like a "recipe for making an omelet without breaking the eggs."[115]

Oppositional Constructs

Tension between proponents and opponents of public journalism is evident in much of the material reviewed above. This opposition becomes more apparent when it is considered in terms of differences in the ways that some of the most powerful players in the media business are defining and operationalizing public journalism. We have identified three constructs that summarize these opposing views: public journalism as a changed news gathering and reporting practice, public journalism as civic activism, and public journalism as a financial boon to the sagging bottom line of news organizations that have lost audience share.

Public Journalism as Changed News Practice

Rosen, whose Project on Public Life and the Press receives substantial funding from the Knight Foundation, focuses on the ways public journalism programs alter news coverage. His definition of public journalism hinges on two primary points: 1) public life is sick, 2) the only way that journalists can help to work a cure is by abandoning their old tools of objectivity and detachment and by adopting new wellness-oriented policies of holism and engagement.

Changes to news practices are also central to some of Batten's early description of public journalism as well as to the changes made at Knight-Ridder papers such as the *Wichita Eagle* and the *Charlotte Observer*. While Knight-Ridder does not stand alone in defining public journalism as changed news practice, the chain and the organizations it funds are central to this definition. The following description of experiments in Charlotte and Wichita summarizes the opposition between traditional and public journalism:

> Instead of covering community meetings, the newspapers organized them. Instead of relegating reader comments to the letters-to-the editor page, the newspapers invited readers to frame the questions that were asked of politicians. Instead of reporting voter registration statistics, the papers tried to convince citizens to participate in elections. Instead of quoting local experts on issues, the newspapers opened up full pages to list organizations residents could contact for assistance or advice.[116]

Some critics suggest that public journalism is a radical departure from the traditional focus of journalistic practice. For example, Jane R. Eisner, editorial page editor of *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, says, "Our central mission is to report the news, to set priorities, to analyze but not to shape or direct outcomes."[117] Max Frankel, former executive editor of *The New York Times* has been one of the most vocal opponents to changed news practices. He suggests that such changes "will inevitably distort the news agenda, devalue problems for which no easy remedy is apparent, and end up compromising the paper's independence."[118]

Public Journalism as Civic Activism

The Pew Center for Civic Journalism promotes an activist role that includes changes to news coverage, but goes beyond those changes to active engagement with the community. Its use of the term "civic journalism" rather than "public journalism" is, at least in part, an attempt to recognize the importance of "taking responsibility beyond the doorstep, shepherding a reaction to media content, and pushing citizens to action."[119]

In describing the cynicism surrounding the 1990 elections, *Washington Post* political reporter David Broder exhorted his colleagues to become "activists, not on behalf of a particular party or politician, but on behalf of the process of self-government."[120]

Peck reports the traditionalists concern that public journalism leads to inappropriate active involvement in problem-solving rather than detached issue reporting. In this view, newspapers need to remain detached and outside community problem-solving arenas. Peck identifies well-known editors, including Len Downie, Jr., executive editor of the *Washington Post* and Rich Aregood, editorial page editor of the *Newark Star Ledger*, as members of this traditionalist group. Traditionalists often characterize public journalism as "unethical," whereas pro-public journalism people characterize traditionalists as "just not getting it."[121]

Public Journalism as Financial Boon

The Gannett News 2000 program is representative of a somewhat different implementation of public journalism. The oppositional nature of Gannet's approach is apparent in the headline of a trade advertisement in 1995 with the headline, "We believe in 'public journalism' -- and have done it for years."[122] Gannett defines public journalism as public service projects that have gone beyond reporting and editorializing to provide hands-on community leadership. However, the Gannett projects and the philosophy behind them seem to be geared to changing content to meet reader demands and increase circulation. Engaging citizens in public discourse is not central to the Gannet News 2000 program.[123]

For example, the *Star-Gazette* of Elmira, NY spearheaded a fundraising campaign to improve the city-owned baseball stadium and keep a baseball franchise in the city. Some observers might view this type of activity as a business engaged in community service, but Gannett lauds it as public journalism.[124]

This model of public journalism which seems targeted to circulation increase has drawn criticism from media traditionalists. Fouhy and Schaffer summarize this opposition by noting that critics have confused the activists function with "boosterism." These critics argue that journalists "have no business taking a role in any civic enterprise, except to report on it."[125]

Summary of Textual Analysis

The texts provide a picture of public journalism that is based on a new, or at least revitalized, relationship between news organizations and citizens. This relationship changes the practice of journalism by focusing more on connection than detachment and by looking to citizens rather than "officials" to define the public agenda.

Images of a quest, often with religious and reformist overtones, inspire much of this literature. Many of the writers use sports analogies to sketch out how this new game of public journalism is played. And both health and creation metaphors are used to suggest a model for healing or fixing the sick and broken relationship between news organizations and citizens.

This new relationship is characterized by changes in journalistic practice, most notably the abandonment of objectivity and the breaking of a co-dependency relationship with the "official" sources of traditional journalism. A unified model has not yet evolved for public journalism, but three models have emerged: one based on changes to news coverage, a second based on community activism, and the third driven by financial concerns.

Discussion

This study represents an early benchmark in academic evaluation of public journalism. The brief examination of key players scratched the surface of some fertile ground for understanding who is defining the public journalism movement. Textual analysis examined and summarized some of the key elements of the emerging philosophy and practice of public journalism. Nevertheless, much remains to be learned about public journalism.

Examination of economic and power structures that undergird the public journalism movement holds promise for a wealth of information. In addition to a depth analysis of organizations introduced in this paper, studies could examine the roles of key players in the public journalism movement such as Jay Rosen, Davis Merritt, and James Batten. Definitions should be refined by surveys and/or discussions with editors and news directors who are making day-to-day decisions about whether to start a public journalism program and, if so, how to fashion it to meet the needs of individual news organizations and communities.

Study of public journalism needs to go beyond further analysis of the questions asked in this paper. Additional questions to be addressed include: How have citizens been impacted in communities where news organizations have adopted public journalism? How have the "traditional" sources responded to changing relationships with the news media? How have news organizations structured themselves to engage in public journalism? How has the process of news gathering been changed by public journalism? What are the long-term implications of public journalism for the financial health of news organizations? How have programs of media activism affected the relationships between news organizations and communities?

We encourage other scholars to take up the quest for understanding how this new relationship between news organizations and citizens will impact public life.

Notes

[1] Davis Merritt, Jr., "Public Journalism: A Movement Toward a Basic Cultural Change," adapted from a column run in the *Wichita Eagle*, 30 October 1994.

[2] Quoted in Tony Case, "Public Journalism Denounced," *Editor & Publisher*, 12 November 1994, 14.

[3] For an analysis of the changes in news content as a result of introduction of public journalism at the Wichita Eagle, see Sally McMillan, Macy Guppy, Bill Kunz, and Raul Reis, "Public Journalism: What Difference Does It Make to Editorial Content?" in *Assessing Public Journalism*, eds. Ed Lambeth, Phil Meyer and Esther Thorson (in press).

[4] Merritt, "Public Journalism: A Movement Toward a Basic Cultural Change."

[5] John Milton, *Areopagitica* (Folcroft, PA: The Folcroft Press, Inc., 1969), 58-59.

[6] George H. Sabine, *A History of Political Theory* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1937), 508-509.

[7] Quoted in Leonard W. Levy, *Freedom of the Press from Zenger to Jefferson* (Indianapolis, IN: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1966), 329.

[8] See J. Herbert Altschull, *Agents of Power* (New York: Longman, 1984).

[9] James Carey, "The Press and Public Discourse," *The Center Magazine*, March, 1987, 5.

[10] John Durham Peters, "Democracy and American Mass Communication Theory: Dewey, Lippmann, Lazarsfeld," *Communication*, 11 (1989): 200.

[11] Ibid., 205.

[12] John Dewey, *The Public and Its Problems* (New York: Henry Holt, 1927), 152.

[13] Peters, 208.

[14] Jay Rosen, "Making Things More Public: On the Political Relationships of the Media Intellectual," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 11 (1994): 367.

[15] Daniel Hallin, "The Passing of the 'High Modernism' of American Journalism," *Journal of Communication* 42, no. 3 (1992): 20.

[16] Michael Schudson, "The Sociology of News Production," *Media, Culture, and Society*, 11 (1989): 271.

[17] Alan G. Stavitsky and Timothy W. Gleason, "Alternative Things Considered: A Comparison of National Public Radio and Pacifica Radio News Coverage," *Journalism Quarterly* 71 (Winter 1994): 779-780.

[18] Hallin, 20.

[19] Lisa Austin, *Public Life and the Press: A Progress Report* (New York: Project on Public Life and the Press, Fall, 1994).

[20] Gannett Corporation, "We believe in 'public journalism'," *American Journalism Review*, April 1995, 16-19.

[21] Circulation figures were obtained from the *Editor & Publisher Yearbook* in 1981 and 1991.

[22] *Editor & Publisher Yearbook 1981*, *Editor & Publisher Yearbook 1985*, and *Editor & Publisher Yearbook 1991*.

[23] Gannett Corporation, Inc., 10-K, 12 December 1995.

[24] Knight-Ridder, Inc., 10-K, 20 December 1995.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Knight-Ridder, Proxy, 24 March 1995; Gannett Corporation, Inc., Proxy, 17 March 1995.

[27] The S&P Publishing and Newspaper Index is comprised of Dow Jones & Company, Inc., Gannett Corporation, Inc., Knight-Ridder, Inc., The New York Times Company, the Times Mirror Company, and the Tribune Company, weighted by market capitalization.

[28] The S&P 500 Stock Index is comprised of 500 U.S. Companies in the industrial, transportation, utilities, and financial industries, weighted by market capitalization.

[29] Bryan Gruley, *Paper Loses* (New York: Grove Press, 1993), xiv.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Knight-Ridder, *Newspapers, Community and Leadership: A Symposium on Editorial Pages* (Key Biscayne, FL: Knight-Ridder, Inc., Nov. 14, 1989), 9.

[32] Knight-Ridder, Proxy. Note also that Batten died June 25, 1995. However, his influence is still an important factor in understanding Knight-Ridder's approach to public journalism.

[33] Gannett Corporation, Proxy.

[34] Peter Drier, "The Position of the Press in the U.S. Power Structure," in *Mass Communication Review Yearbook*, eds. Ellen Wartella and D. Charles Whitney (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1983), 446.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Graham Murdock, "Large corporations and the control of the communications industries," in *Culture, Society and the Media*, ed. James Curran, Michael Gurevitch and Janet Woollacott (London: Methuen, 1982), 118-150.

[38] Drier, 443.

[39] Gruley.

[40] Quoted in Drier, 444.

[41] George Garneau, "Gannett Foundation's revised mission," *Editor & Publisher*, 8 June 1991.

[42] Michael Hoyt, "Are You Now, or Will You Ever Be, a Civic Journalist?" *Columbia Journalism Review*, September/October, 1995, 27-33.

[43] Jay Rosen, "A Scholar's Perspective," in *Imagining Public Journalism: An Editor and Scholar Reflect on the Birth of an Idea*, transcript of Roy W. Howard Public Lecture in Journalism and Mass Communication Research delivered at Indiana University, 13 April 1995, 17.

[44] Hoyt, "Are You Now or Will You Ever Be a Public Journalist," 28.

[45] Pew Charitable Trusts, 1994 Annual Report.

[46] Davis Merritt, Jr., *Public Journalism and Public Life: Why Telling the News is Not Enough* (Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1995), 87.

[47] "Batten Award for Civic Journalism," *Editor & Publisher*, 26 August 1995, 46.

[48] Knight-Ridder, *Newspapers, Community and Leadership*, 1.

[49] Jay Rosen, "Public Journalism: A Case for Public Scholarship," *Change*, May-June, 1995, 35.

[50] Rosen, "Making Things More Public," 371.

[51] Gannett Corporation, *News 2000*, an undated, internally-written description of the company's revised news program. Received April 22, 1995.

[52] William F. Woo, *As Old Gods Falter: Public Journalism and the Tradition of Detachment*, transcript of lecture delivered at the University of California, Riverside, 13 February 1995.

[53] Rosen, "Making Things More Public," 371.

[54] Rosen, "A Scholar's Perspective," p. 17.

[55] For a detailed listing of recent offerings on public journalism see Arthur Charity, "Reluctant Sea Change: Resources Abound for Journalists Seeking Information about Public Journalism's Role," *Quill*, January 1996, 23-27.

[56] Hemant Shah, "News and the Self-Production of Society: *Times of India* Coverage of Caste Conflict and Job Reservations in India," *Journalism Monographs*, 144 (1994): 7.

[57] Stuart Hall, "The Hinterland of Science; Ideology and the Sociology of Knowledge," *On Ideology, WPCS*, 10 (1977): 27-29.

[58] John Fiske, *Introduction to Communication Studies*, 2d ed. (New York and London: Routledge, 1990), 85-86.

[59] G. Lakoff and M. Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).

[60] Tim O'Sullivan, John Hartley, Danny Saunders, Martin Montgomery, and John Fiske, *Key Concepts in Communication and Cultural Studies*, 2d ed. (New York and London: Routledge, 1994), 30-32.

[61] Merritt, "Public Journalism: A Movement Toward a Basic Cultural Change."

[62] Davis Merritt, Jr., "Public Journalism: What it Means, How It Works," in *Public Journalism: Theory and Practice* (Dayton, OH: Kettering Foundation, 1994).

[63] Jay Rosen, "Beyond Objectivity," *Nieman Reports*, Winter, 1993, 53.

[64] Nancy Comiskey, "Defining public life," *APME Readership Committee*, September 1994, 35-37.

[65] Merritt, "Public Journalism: A Movement Toward a Basic Cultural Change."

[66] Jay Rosen, *Public Journalism as a Democratic Art* (New York: Project on Public Life and the Press, 1994), 4.

[67] William Glaberson, "The New Press Criticism: News as the Enemy of Hope" *New York Times*, 9 October 1994, 1 (4).

[68] See, for example, Merritt "Public Journalism: What it Means, How it Works."

[69] Rosen, "Making Things More Public," 378.

[70] Jay Rosen, *Getting the Connections Right: What Public Journalism Might Be* (New York: Project on Public Life and the Press, 1994), 12.

[71] Rosen, "Public Journalism: A Case for Public Scholarship," 36.

[72] Ed Fouhy and Jan Schaffer, "Civic Journalism -- Growing and Evolving," *Nieman Reports*, Spring 1995, 16-18.

[73] Alicia C. Shepard, "The Gospel of Public Journalism," *American Journalism Review*, Summer 1994, 29-30.

[74] Woo, *As Old Gods Falter*.

[75] Rosen, *Getting the Connections Right*, 14.

[76] Edward D. Miller, *The Charlotte Project: Helping Citizens Take Back Democracy* (St. Petersburg, FL: The Poynter Institute for Media Studies, 1994), 36.

[77] Case, "Public Journalism Denounced," 14.

[78] Chris Peck, "The Ethics of Public Journalism: Three Views," *ASNE Bulletin*, March 1995, 44.

[79] For case examples of how newspapers have implemented public journalism, see the full issue of *The APME Journalism Studies Report*, September 1994. Austin, *Public Life and the Press: A Progress Report*. Gannett Corporation, "We believe in 'public journalism.'"

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[80] Rosen, "Beyond Objectivity," 51.

[81] Rosen, "Getting the Connections Right," 11.

[82] Steven Smith, "War in the Gulf, Trouble in the Street: Lessons from the 1991 News Year," transcript of the Robert W. Chandler Lecture presented at the University of Oregon, 1991.

[83] Andrea Yeager, "Putting 'Children First," *APME Readership Committee*, August, 1994, 10-14.

[84] Michael Bales, "Tuning in to Public Concerns," *APME Readership Committee*, August, 1994, 22-24.

[85] Miller, *The Charlotte Project*.

[86] Many of the articles on public journalism focus on the ways that citizens have become more involved in defining and commenting on public issues. For an extended example of this process, see Miller, *The Charlotte Project*.

[87] For examples of how public journalism has embraced the mobilizing function of the media see: Michael Hoyt, "The Wichita Experiment," *Columbia Journalism Review*, August 1992, 43-47. However, it should be noted that discussion of the need for mobilizing information preceded the public journalism movement. See for example, James B. Lemert, "Effective Public Opinion," in *Public Opinion, the Press, and Public Policy* ed. J. David Kennamer (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger: 1992), 41-61.

[88] Austin, *Public Journalism: A Progress Report*.

[89] Joseph Campbell with Bill Moyers, *The Power of Myth* (New York: Anchor Books Doubleday, 1988), 157-158.

[90] Rosen, *Public Journalism as a Democratic Art*, 16.

[91] Rosen, "Making Things More Public," 369.

[92] Max Frankel, "Fix it Journalism," *New York Times Magazine*, 21 May 1995, 28, 30.

[93] Shepard, "The Gospel of Public Journalism," 28-35.

[94] Woo, *As Old Gods Falter*.

[95] Ed Fouhy, "Is 'Civic' Journalism the Answer?" *Communicator*, May 1994, 18-19.

[96] M.L. Stein, "Beware of Public Journalism," *Editor & Publisher*, 6 May 1996, 18.

[97] Frankel, "Fix it Journalism," 28, 30.

[98] Tom Field, "Shop Talk at Thirty" *Editor & Publisher*, 18 March 1995, 56.

[99] Everette Dennis, "Raising Questions about Civic or Public Journalism," *Editor & Publisher*, 29 July 1995, 48.

[100] See Davis Merritt, Jr., "Public Journalism: A Movement Toward a Basic Cultural Change," and Edward M. Fouhy, "Out of the Pressbox, onto the Field," *Civic Catalyst*, December 1994, 1-2.

[101] William Glaberson, "The New Press Criticism"

[102] Toner, Robin "The Bitter Tone of the 94 Campaign elicits Worry," *New York Times*, 13 November 1994, 1 (1).

[103] Rosen, *Public Journalism as a Democratic Art*.

[104] Comiskey, "Defining public life," 35-37.

[105] John Bare, "Case Study -- Wichita and Charlotte: The Leap of a Passive Press to Activism," *Media Studies Journal*, 6 (4), 1992, 149.

[106] Case, "Public Journalism Denounced," 14, 45

[107] Thomas Winship, "Civic Journalism: A Steroid for the Press," *Editor & Publisher*, 7 October 1995, 5.

[108] Pew Center for Civic Journalism informational brochure

[109] Gannett Corporation, "We believe in 'public journalism,'" 16-19.

[110] Shepard, "The Gospel of Public Journalism," 28-35.

[111] Peter Bhatia, "Behind Public Journalism," *APME Readership Committee*, August 1994, 4-9.

[112] Austin, *Public Journalism: A Progress Report*.

[113] Merritt, "Public Journalism: A Movement Toward a Basic Cultural Change," 2.

[114] Fouhy, "Out of the Pressbox, onto the Field," 1-2.

[115] Frankel, "Fix it Journalism," 30.

[116] Bare, "Case Study."

[117] Hoyt, "Are You Now, or Will You Ever Be, A Civic Journalist?" 29.

[118] Mark Jurkowitz, "From the Citizen Up," *Forbes Media Critic*, Winter 1996, 77.

[119] From an April 21, 1995 telephone interview with Frank Denton who is editor of the *Wisconsin State Journal* which has received grant money from the Pew Center for Civic Journalism for its civic journalism projects.

[120] Rosen, "A Scholar's Perspective," 23.

[121] Peck, 44.

[122] Gannett, "We believe in 'public journalism.'"

[123] Gannett, *News 2000*.

[124] Gannett Corporation, "We Believe in Public Journalism," 17.

[124] Fouhy and Schaffer, 18.

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Stamping the Documents: The Rise Of The Security Classification System

Dr. David H. Morrissey
Department of Journalism and Technical Communication
Clark C-225 Colorado State University
Fort Collins, Colorado 80523

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(970) 491-5986 dmorrissey@vines.colostate.edu

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Abstract

In 1995, President Clinton signed Executive Order 12958, significantly altering the security classification system. His order has the potential to make secrecy more costly, time-consuming and disruptive than disclosure; releasing millions of documents.

Yet if the order is new, the classification system of which it is a part is not. Security classification has grown from a minor military procedure into a permanent executive branch bureaucracy, empowering the presidency at the expense of Congress.

Dr. David H. Morrissey
Department of Journalism and Technical Communication
Clark C-225 Colorado State University
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May 19, 1996

(970) 491-5986 dmorrissey@vines.colostate.edu

Stamping the Documents: Introduction

In 1991 the Soviet Union collapsed, ending more than four decades of Cold War. But as the Cold War ended, the security classification system it spawned continued to thrive. Since 1991, federal officials have classified information as "Top Secret," "Secret," or "Confidential," more than 17.5 million times. This is equivalent to creating -- in each week since the collapse of the USSR -- a stack of classified paper as tall as the Washington Monument.[1]

Much of this, however, may be changing. On April 17, 1995, President Bill Clinton issued Executive Order 12958[2], a measure significantly changing the federal security classification system. The order, which took effect in October, will release much previously classified national security information and make it harder to classify new information. In its most important change, the order for the first time requires that federal agencies take extra steps to maintain classification of records. If agencies fail to take these actions, a system of automatic declassification takes over. With certain relatively narrow exceptions, most newly classified information will be automatically declassified after 10 years; most older documents after 25 years.[3]

The Clinton order deserves study for several reasons. Initially, it offers scholars, lawmakers, journalists and activists access to previously unattainable federal information. The Clinton order also is worthy of examination because of the order it replaces, set in place in 1981 by President Ronald Reagan. Issued when Sino-American relations were at a nadir, Reagan's 1981 order required agencies to take extra effort before declassification could occur, in effect treating secrecy as the status quo.[4] Yet Clinton's order also deserves examination as the latest addition to a system of executive branch secrecy that now employs thousands and spends millions yearly. Executive Order 12958 is merely the latest in a series of nine major security classification executive orders -- the first issued in 1940 by President Franklin Roosevelt. These orders are important because they trace the growth in the often-abused classification system. They also are

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important because they reveal one means by which the executive branch has increased its power at the expense of Congress, assuming control over a large volume of government information. This paper examines the Clinton executive order and its likely impact by examining the history of security classification executive orders. Relying on presidential and congressional primary source documents, it traces the classification system's origins, growth and justification.

Security Classification: Early Disputes

Security classification is "the formal process in the Executive Branch of limiting access to or restricting distribution of information on the grounds of national security."[5] Much of the system is relatively new. The now ubiquitous phrase "Top Secret" was not used by a president until 1950. The system itself dates largely from the years preceding and following World War II.[6]

Yet if the classification system is of curiously modern origin, the problems it confronts are hardly new. The need for secrecy in diplomacy and spying, and in certain other areas, was endorsed at the Constitutional Convention -- a gathering which met in secret.[7] Despite this, the federal government's information policy has always rested on two intertwined yet antagonistic principles. The first asserts the government's need for secrecy in certain areas. The second insists the public has a right to most government information. Neither of these principles is expressly laid out in the Constitution, yet each is generally deemed essential to the functioning of a democratic society. In the best of circumstances there is a balance between secrecy and disclosure. But there is inevitable tension between the principles, and the right to obtain information is usually asserted most strongly when the executive branch withholds information from Congress.

In its earliest form, security classification can be traced to Revolutionary War regulations, prohibiting soldiers from unauthorized correspondence with the enemy. Legislation prohibiting spying was enacted about the same time. There was no formal classification system. Military commanders wrote "secret" on some papers and the markings had "ordinary-language meanings in shadings implied by the context and circumstances."[8] During the nation's early history, most executive branch agencies formed information policies based on immediate need and the 1789 "housekeeping statute." This early measure gave agencies authority to maintain "records, papers and property." Most agency heads assumed it gave them authority to decide when and to whom their information should be released, a conclusion few at the time (in principle at least) disputed. Yet this imprecisely drafted bookkeeping measure was sometimes broadly interpreted, becoming a frequently cited justification for denying congressional requests for agency documents. So often was the statute used for this purpose that in 1958 Congress amended the 1789 measure, specifically ending its use as a justification for secrecy.[9]

American attitudes toward secrets remained casual for decades. During the Civil War, Northern newspapers published troop movements,[10] and there was no formal classification system. Not until 1869 did the War Department issue its first regulation protecting "secrets." General Orders No. 35 prohibited "photographic or other views of (the regular forts)" without War Department permission.[11] In 1898, Congress codified War Department orders protecting harbor defenses. This measure, enacted as relations with Spain worsened, provided prison terms and fines for violators. It was a significant precedent. In 1976, a Senate committee concluded that with this 1898 statute, Congress for the first time sanctioned War Department directives protecting information, backing those directives with significant penalties.[12]

Thus, a security classification system was in place by the early 20th century. Yet it remained confusing and poorly defined. In 1907, the Army's Chief of Artillery complained that the word "Confidential" was being indiscriminately stamped on documents -- including one report containing only the formula for making whitewash.[13] New regulations then declared that "Confidential" would mean the same thing as "For Your Eyes Only," a solution that solved nothing since this, too, was terminology with no precise meaning.

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In 1912 the War Department again tried to clarify the system. General Orders No. 3 established a "strictly confidential" category for information relating to seacoast defenses. This information, described in detail, was to be "kept under lock" and available only to certain, specified persons. "Here, in outline," a National Archives study later concluded, "was a complete system for the protection of defense information much like the systems of today..."[14]

The system expanded in World War I, as Americans borrowed ideas and terminology from their British and French allies. On Nov. 21, 1917, the American Expeditionary Forces issued General Orders No. 64, creating three classification markings: "Secret," "Confidential," and "For Official Use Only." The orders listed who should have access to classified documents, specifying this material was to have limited distribution and not be taken "into Front Line Trenches."[15]

Following the Armistice, the War Department again tried and failed to clarify the classification system. The post-war regulations insisted that the ambiguous definition of "Secret" -- a marking capable of multiple interpretations -- was sufficiently clear to distinguish it from "Confidential" and "Official Use Only." Concluded one analysis of these regulations:

> This system was not a product of any thoughtful consideration of the general problem of protecting defense information... It was a result of a reflex response to immediate necessities arising in the prosecution of the war ... The ambiguity of applicability that was not avoided was unfortunately established as a bench mark for subsequent revision of ... regulations.[16]

Between the world wars, the classification system expanded into new territory.[17] In 1936, the War Department issued regulations for the first time covering information not directly related to the military. This was a significant change. Under the new regulations, a "Secret" marking could be placed on information "of such nature that its disclosure might endanger the national security, or cause serious injury *to the interests or prestige of the Nation, an individual, or any government activity, or be of great advantage to a foreign nation.*" Regulations existing prior to 1936 were often poorly drafted. Yet their central intent was usually clear. Classification was primarily intended to protect military fortifications, personnel and hardware. By 1936, however, in an action taken without express congressional authorization, military regulations for the first time ordered the withholding of foreign policy and political data. The key phrase, "national security," was open to multiple interpretations.[18] As a Senate committee later concluded:

> (B)y the late 1930's, restriction labels knew no bounds; they could be applied to virtually any type of defense or non-defense information; they pertained to situations involving 'national security,' a policy sphere open to definition within many quarters of government and by various authorities; and they carried sanctions which left few with any desire to question their appropriateness or intention.[19]

Roosevelt: Establishing Presidential Control

In 1938, Congress unanimously passed Senate Bill 1485, a noncontroversial, one-page defense measure prohibiting unauthorized photographs, sketches or maps of military bases. One of the bill's five paragraphs authorized the president to define "vital military and naval installations or equipment as requiring protection against the general dissemination of information..." The statute's legislative history and the limited debate during its passage provide no indication Congress believed it was creating a security classification system, much less one under presidential control.[20] But two years later, on March 22, 1940, Franklin Roosevelt cited this language as authority in issuing the first executive order on security classification. Executive Order 8381 was an important step in creating the modern security classification system and placing it under presidential control. It was not, however, immediately recognized as such. The potential breadth of the order wasn't fully appreciated until nearly a year later, when a reporter's press conference question revealed Roosevelt's conception of his authority under the order:

> Q: Mr. President, what does constitute a national defense secret?
>
> THE PRESIDENT: Well, I don't think we have ever had any trouble about that before. There has been mighty little that has been kept secret, and I don't think it has hurt anybody. There are things that have been kept secret on the advice or recommendation of the people who are responsible -- primarily responsible -- for American defense, the Army and the Navy.
>
> Q: Mr. President, if the attitude is taken that any testimony given on the Hill in executive session remains secret, isn't the final test what the Government wants to give out and what it doesn't want to give out?
>
> THE PRESIDENT: No, only if the Government didn't give out or held secret things that there was no reason for holding secret.

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Q: Then what is the test?
THE PRESIDENT: The test is what the Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy thinks it would be harmful to the defense of this country to give out.[21]

It is debatable whether Congress in 1938 would have given Roosevelt control of the classification system had it known this was the question at hand. Indeed, in one vote where something of this nature was proposed, legislators balked. In 1942, Roosevelt sent Congress the War Security Act, giving the president added control over internal security, including new controls over information. Congress debated and then killed the measure.[22] In 1938, however, presidential control of classification was not stated as the issue at hand. Nor was it a power Roosevelt publicly sought. Two years later, however, when Roosevelt issued an executive order based on this statute, the order did establish de facto presidential control of the classification system within military agencies of the federal government.[23] Soon after, in September, 1942, the Office of War Information extended the system to cover civilian federal agencies as well.[24]

From this point on, security classification would become a prerogative claimed by the president, although not without congressional objection. Seven succeeding presidents would issue security classification executive orders, the most recent in 1995. Within a few years of Roosevelt's death, presidents even abandoned Roosevelt's claim to be acting in accordance with congressional will, instead insisting it was their inherent constitutional right to classify secrets. Prior to Roosevelt's order, the classification system could be faulted for not clearly defining what information needed protection, by whom, or for how long. Those criticisms remained largely valid after 1940. What changed was control of the system. What had been a bureaucratic procedure centered in the military, subject to at least nominal congressional oversight, became a claimed inherent right of the executive. Congress did not overtly surrender this authority. Even at this early date, a variety of statutes established congressional intent to also govern in this area.[25] If Roosevelt's action resulted in de factor presidential control of the classification system, congressional actions established that legislators believed authority in this area was shared.

Truman: Expanding the System

Disputes over the classification system became more intense during the Truman Administration, when Roosevelt's executive order was significantly expanded. The first change came in 1950, when President Truman issued Executive Order 10104, adding a fourth classification category, "Top Secret," to the three then used by the armed forces ("Secret," "Confidential," and "Restricted.")[26] Yet even as Truman issued his first order, he charged the National Security Council with drafting a more comprehensive plan. The result was Executive Order 12090, issued on Sept. 27, 1951. With this order, Truman discarded previous references to congressional authority validating presidential action, instead citing implied presidential powers. His order was issued "by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and statutes, and as President of the United States..."[27] This significant break with the past strengthened Truman's hand in secrecy policy. It emphasized his joint responsibilities as president, charged with ensuring laws be faithfully executed, and as Commander-in-Chief, entrusted with the national defense.

The new order continued the classification categories of Truman's previous order. But while Truman's 1950 order gave classification authority just to the president and the Secretaries of Defense, Army, Navy and Air Force (a policy following Roosevelt's example of limiting classification authority to clearly defined military personnel), Truman's 1951 order permitted any executive branch agency, including civilian agencies, to classify "official information the safeguarding of which is necessary in the interest of national security."[28] It was a noteworthy expansion. As a congressional report noted, until this order most civilian agencies seeking legal justification for withholding documents relied on the 1789 "housekeeping statute," an old and obscure law not always relevant to existing circumstances. Now there was added weight behind their document denials. The extension of the system to civilian agencies was given extra impact when Truman also broadened the classification categories. "Classified security information" was now defined as information requiring protection "in the interest of national security," a less-precise category than "national defense," used in Roosevelt's order and the first Truman order.[29]

Truman's new order triggered sharp congressional debate. Forty-four GOP senators signed a manifesto pledging to "resist any attempt to conceal facts from the American people."[30] Other lawmakers called for a review of the president's powers and assumptions underlying Truman's order. Four days after Truman issued his order, Senators John Bricker, Homer Capehart and Homer Ferguson introduced Senate Bill 2190 "to prohibit unreasonable suppression of information by the Executive Branch." The measure declared Truman's executive order "hereby repealed."[31]

The introduction of SB 2190 led to a Senate committee study of the Truman order. After a review of court decisions and the work of constitutional scholars, the study concluded the controversy was at heart a dispute over powers the Constitution granted the branches of government. At issue was whether Congress or the president had sole authority to operate in this area. The study concluded the order was "a mandate by the Chief Executive to his subordinates, in their capacities as ... employees of the Federal Government...." Other presidents had issued similar orders, although not necessarily on this subject. Since the Constitution was silent on executive orders, the president had relied on implied powers in issuing Executive Order 10290, "exercising his constitutional general power of direction in order to insure that the laws would be faithfully executed."[32] But while the president had power in this area, the study concluded it was not absolute. The Constitution gave Congress authority to make the laws, and thus power to limit presidential enactment of policy through executive orders:

> (A)n Executive order, or any other Executive action, whether by formal order or by regulations, cannot contravene an act of Congress which is Constitutional. Thus, when an Executive order collides with a statute which is enacted pursuant to the constitutional authority of the Congress, the statute will prevail.... Since the President can control only those duties of his subordinates which are discretionary, to the extent that the Congress prescribes these duties in detail, these officials can exercise no discretion and their actions cannot be controlled by the

> President.... (T)hese clauses would seem to give the Congress ample authority to enact legislation covering the subject-matter of Executive Order 10290, and, under the authorities cited, the President could take no lawful action in conflict with such congressional enactment.[33]

The study emphasized this was a largely unexercised legislative power. By acting, the president had seized and for the moment held authority in defining the classification system. Congressional complaints about the Truman order were weakened by the realization that Congress had authority to enact its own security classification system and had failed to do so.[34]

By the Truman administration, the classification system had assumed its modern form. Three characteristics, central to the system, were now in place. Initially, the system was expansive. Regulations governing classified information were wide ranging. In addition, not only was the system itself growing, the government in which it operated was expanding, increasing the effects of classification. In 1930, shortly before Roosevelt's election, 601,319 civilians worked for the federal government. By 1940 that work force increased 73 percent, to 1.04 million.[35] As the federal government increased in size it also increased in power, extending its influence over new areas of American society. This substantially larger work force created substantially more information, classified by a larger security classification establishment. The system also had become essentially a presidential system, defined largely by executive orders. While Congress concluded it could act in this area, its actions largely ratified what the president had done. Congressional enactment of various defense and espionage measures in effect encouraged the president to act with primacy in this area. As a Senate committee would conclude in a 1971 study, "through legislation such as this Congress has on occasion given recognition to the classification system, although it has made no overall attempt to regulate."[36] Finally, while Congress had not curbed what it saw as growing executive abuse of classification, legislators were aware of the power the system gave the president. Congress realized the ability to control the flow of information to Congress, the press and the public contributed significantly to presidential power.

Eisenhower: Congressional Interest Increases

Truman's executive order became an issue in the 1952 presidential campaign. Candidate Dwight Eisenhower promised his election would end interference "with the right of a free people to know what their government is doing."[37] Once elected, Eisenhower directed Attorney General Herbert Brownell to examine Truman's plan and recommend a new order that would protect national safety "and at the same time, honor the basic tenants of freedom of information."[38] That order (No. 10501) was issued on Nov. 5, 1953, with Eisenhower insisting he had struck a balance between protecting defense information "and the need for citizens of this country to know what their government is doing."[39] The old Truman plan, Brownell told a gathering of newspaper editors, had encouraged "the dangerous policy heretofore used by dictator nations of authorizing government officials to use the term 'National Security' indiscriminately, and thereby throw a veil of secrecy over many items which historically have been open to the public...."[40]

This was a heady introduction for the new order, which at first seemed to deliver much of what was promised. Although Eisenhower, like Truman, relied on implied constitutional power to issue his order, he narrowed classification standards by replacing "national security" with the more narrowly defined "national defense." And while Truman's order gave all executive branch agencies classification authority, Eisenhower's order stripped 28 agencies of this power. Another 17 agencies lost some classification power.[41] Eisenhower's order for the first time included provisions for review and appeal of classification actions, scrapped the controversial "restricted" classification marking and more carefully defined remaining classification categories.[42]

The Eisenhower order would be modified several times, but it would remain "the basic order under which information affecting the national defense was classified during the Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson administrations."[43] Yet, despite a promising start, it never seriously altered the classification system. Eisenhower, while overturning segments of Truman's order, continued Truman's policy of claiming the executive had inherent authority to issue executive orders. Like Truman, Eisenhower cited no legislation on which he based his action. And like Truman, he encountered no significant congressional challenge to this claimed authority. As a congressional study issued in the last year of the Eisenhower administration concluded, "As the dearth of congressional enactments has left the field wide open for Executive occupation, it seems unlikely that its validity may be challenged successfully."[44] In addition, the Eisenhower reforms, while loudly trumpeted, were superficial. With no sanctions for overclassification the declassification process was frequently ignored.[45] While some agencies lost the power to classify, major agencies stamped documents as before. The authority to classify was retained by 1.5 million federal employees[46] and classification standards, while narrowed, remained elastic.

Presidential action soon reinforced the belief that disclosure was not Eisenhower's top concern. The president issued his order when Sen. Joseph McCarthy was demanding executive branch documents concerning alleged security risks. McCarthy's demands effectively ended any chance the new order would increase openness. On May 17, 1954, barely six months after issuing his order, Eisenhower sent a letter to department heads ordering them not to provide documents to McCarthy. But in shutting off access to McCarthy, Eisenhower also limited access to the rest of Congress, although initially the letter was thought to be aimed solely at the Wisconsin senator. Eisenhower based his action on a sweeping assertion of the president's right to withhold information. Whatever movement the executive order might have generated toward increased disclosure was set back by the May 17 letter, which informed department heads "(I)t is not in the public interest that any of their conversations or communications, or any documents or reproductions, concerning such advice be disclosed (to Congress)."[47]

Some newspapers did point out that the broadly drafted McCarthy letter could allow the concealment of almost any information. But there was a belief, among many in the press and in

Congress, that the letter was a one-time roadblock for a renegade senator. This was not to be. The letter quickly was used by executive branch agencies to deny other congressional requests for information. Some agencies concluded the president's information policy was stated more accurately in the McCarthy letter than in Executive Order 10501. At a 1955 congressional hearing, it was pointed out that in little more than a year, 17 departments had used the letter to withhold government information: "Conversation and documents used in arriving at decisions are regarded as confidential and the Congress and reporters alike are denied information."[48]

As controversy over the McCarthy letter developed, secrecy was examined in other formats. In 1955, Congress established the Commission on Government Security ("The Wright Commission") to investigate the government's security program. In 1957, it recommended:

- Abolishing the "confidential" category of information, which it said was overused.
- Limiting (and better training) those authorized to classify information.
- Creating a "Central Security Office" with review powers over the classification system.
- Prosecuting those who improperly released classified documents.[49].

Also in 1955, the Defense Secretary created the Committee on Classified Information ("The Coolidge Committee,") to study classification and information "leaking." It concluded overclassification was a security threat and had reached "serious proportions." It recommended:

- Creating a "declassification director."
- Providing better public explanations when information was withheld.
- Initiating a serious attack on overclassification.[50]

Most recommendations from the two groups were ignored.[51]

The Moss Subcommittee

Eisenhower's McCarthy letter and the unfulfilled promises of Executive Order 10501 helped prompt creation in 1955 of the House Special Government Information Subcommittee. Chaired by Rep. John Moss, D-Calif., the subcommittee held 173 hearings between 1955 and 1960. Its actions led to passage of the Freedom of Information Act in 1966. Moss concluded virtually every executive branch official opposed relaxation of presidential control over information. The subcommittee found numerous instances where agencies withheld information from Congress or the public,[52] and in 1956, it concluded that the president's claim of an inherent right to withhold information "has never been upheld by the courts... It has been a mere Executive ipse dixit."

> Refusals by the president and heads of departments to furnish information to the Congress are not constitutional law. They represent a mere raw naked claim of privilege. The judiciary has never specifically ruled on the direct problem involved in a refusal by federal agencies to furnish information to Congress.[53]

The subcommittee's key recommendations included:

- Reducing overclassification and limiting those authorized to classify documents.
- Stressing to government employees that classification was only for national security matters.
- Establishing an independent declassification program.
- Providing more specific classification guidelines.[54]

Late in the Eisenhower administration, Congress began to act. On Jan. 11, 1957, Missouri Senator Thomas C. Hennings introduced Senate Bill 1248, which along with a companion bill introduced by Rep. Moss, was the first version of what would become the Freedom of Information Act.[55] In 1958, Congress amended the 1789 housekeeping statute, adding language stating, "This section does not authorize the withholding of information from the public or limiting the availability of records to the public."[56] But the amendment had little effect. In signing the measure, Eisenhower said he interpreted it as:

> (N)ot intended to, and indeed could not, alter the existing power of the head of an executive department, to keep appropriate information or papers confidential in the public interest. The power in the executive branch is inherent under the Constitution.[57]

Kennedy: Mixed Signals

John F. Kennedy came into office much as Dwight Eisenhower had eight years earlier, promising open government. "The massive wall of secrecy erected between the Executive Branch and the Congress as well as the citizen must be torn down," said the Democratic Party Platform.[58] Yet during his brief tenure, Kennedy sent Congress mixed signals on secrecy and classification. On April 21, 1961, a few days after the Bay of Pigs invasion failed, Kennedy used a press conference to defend withholding information on that action. Shortly after, in a meeting with newspaper editors, Kennedy encouraged voluntary peacetime censorship.[59]

On Sept. 20, 1961, however, Kennedy issued Executive Order 10964, amending Eisenhower's classification system. The order required classifiers "to the fullest extent possible" to indicate if documents could be downgraded or declassified. Classifiers also were given authority to mark documents for automatic downgrading and declassification, although they were not required to use this power. Presidential assistant Lee White was charged with investigating complaints about improper classification. The Kennedy amendments also, however, added a new section to Eisenhower's system, emphasizing the dangers of unauthorized information disclosure and directing department heads to "take prompt and stringent administrative action" against personnel who improperly released classified information.[60]

Shortly after the executive order was issued, the Committee on Government Operations released a report urging Kennedy to adopt previous committee recommendations for curbing classification abuses. Legislators listed two key problems: the lack of penalties for overclassifiers and the lack of any effective means to challenge improper classification. The committee recommended the president strengthen Eisenhower's appeals procedure and called for independent assessment of overclassification complaints.[61] Ultimately, however, Kennedy's plan accomplished little and failed to end classification abuses. Little automatic declassification occurred. And while Lee White was charged with assessing classification complaints, there is no record of any complaint ever making its way to White's desk.[62] As legislators concluded:

> A security system which carries no penalties for using secrecy stamps to hire errors in judgment, waste, inefficiency, or worse, is perversion of true security. The praiseworthy slogan of Defense Secretary McNamara -- "when in doubt, underclassify" -- has little effect when there is absolutely no penalty to prevent secrecy from being used to insure individual job security rather than national military security.[63]

Congressional Action: The Freedom of Information Act

During the Kennedy administration, legislative concerns about secrecy and classification began to coalesce. In 1963, Sen. Edward Long, a Democrat, and Minority Leader Everette Dirksen, introduced SB 1666. The measure, which revised the Administrative Procedure Act, laid the groundwork for the Freedom of Information Act. "Free people are of necessity, informed," Long said. "Uninformed people can never be free."[64] On July 28, 1964, a version of the FOIA passed the Senate, despite objections from virtually every executive branch agency. In 1966, the measure passed both houses and President Johnson signed it into law.[65]

The FOIA established a statutory right of access to executive branch information unless the government demonstrated the information fell within one of the law's exemptions. Before the law's enactment, those requesting information had the burden to justify disclosure. The FOIA dealt with national security information in its first exemption, stating this information must be released unless it was "specifically required by Executive order to be kept secret in the interest of national defense or foreign policy."[66] While this amounted to congressional, statutory recognition of the president's right to issue executive orders on security classification, it was also an attempt to limit this presidential power. Legislators concluded the language of this exemption "both limits the present vague phrase 'in the public interest' (found in the Administrative Procedure Act) and gives the area of necessary secrecy a more precise definition."[67]

Passage of the FOIA represented congressional validation of its right to act in the area of security classification -- a right long asserted but only timidly exercised. Congress had seen a new institution grow up within the post-war presidency -- a permanent, powerful, security classification system answerable in large part only to the White House. Enacting the FOIA was congressional recognition that this new institution required more than a sporadic, case-by-case response from legislators. Enacting the FOIA created a legislative counterbalance -- an ongoing response to a permanent executive branch classification apparatus.[68]

Nixon: Revising Eisenhower's Order

The security classification system was next overhauled in the early 1970s, a move prompted by the 1971 decision of the New York Times to publish *The Pentagon Papers*. The newspaper's decision to publish the secret documents prompted President Richard Nixon to create an interagency committee, charged with reviewing security classification procedures. The committee concluded the Eisenhower order had four key flaws:

- It was too complicated.
- Too many people could classify or remove information from automatic declassification.
- "The sheer volume" of national security information "has become so great that it simply overwhelms any declassification effort which is not largely and effectively automatic."
- There was no effective monitoring of the order.[69]

The committee's work provided the basis for Executive Order 11652, issued on March 8, 1972. In the first major overhaul of the classification system in nearly two decades, the order further limited who could classify information, while retaining declassification timetables. Nixon also established an interagency classification review committee under the National Security Council, to provide "a continuing monitoring process"[70] of the classification system.

Yet the order didn't resolve all problems. Its preamble asserted classified information "is expressly exempted from public disclosure" by the FOIA, adding "wrongful disclosure ... is recognized in the Federal Criminal Code as providing a basis for prosecution." By citing the "national defense or foreign policy" exemption of the FOIA as among the authorities for his order, Nixon at first appeared to be deferring to the will of Congress, much as Roosevelt's citation of a 1938 statute suggested he was following congressional intent. Yet as a congressional committee pointed out, Nixon's reference to the FOIA "misconstrues the basic meaning of the Freedom of Information Act." The FOIA *allowed* government officials the option of withholding sensitive information. Nixon's order made withholding mandatory. As to punishment under the Federal Criminal Code, this would occur only if the improperly released material was specified in

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the code. Not all material in the order was also covered by the code.[71]

Nixon also expanded the definition of what was classifiable. Eisenhower's order protected "national defense" information. Nixon's order listed "national defense or foreign relations," collectively referred to as "national security" information. Observed a congressional committee:

> The semantic and legal differences between the terms "national defense" and "national security" and the terms "foreign policy" and "foreign relations" weaken the entire foundation of Executive Order 11652, while failing to correct a basic defect in Executive Order 10501 -- namely, its lack of a definition for the term "national defense." ... "Relations" is a much broader word than "policy" because it includes all operational matters, no matter how insignificant.[72]

The Nixon executive order also drew criticism, as had earlier orders, for not providing specific penalties for overclassification or improper classification. As a congressional analysis of the Nixon order concluded, warnings without sanctions weren't likely to be effective.[73] Underscoring this point was a subcommittee analysis, also issued in 1972, that reported the results of a study of four years of agency classification practices:

> The analysis of responses to the questionnaire showed that during this 4-year period, these agencies carried out 2,433 investigations of violations of regulations governing the classification of information under Executive Order 10501. They assessed administrative penalties ranging from reprimands to loss of pay, against 2,504 individuals involved in the investigations. But only two of the investigations involved cases of overclassification and not a single administrative penalty was imposed against overclassification.[74]

In 1980, Nixon's order was assessed in the first report of the Information Security Oversight Office, the monitoring agency created by President Jimmy Carter to replace Nixon's review committee. ISOO concluded:

> In many sections of the (Nixon) Order the language was vague and permissive, or failed to address specific areas. Many agency programs lacked sufficient personnel and resources to effectively carry out the mandates of the Order, despite the requirements of the National Security Council directive that adequate personnel and funding be made available. The lack of a firm requirement in the Order for issuance of written classification guidance impeded consistency in classification and contributed to abuse of the system....[75]

Carter and Reagan: Point and Counterpoint

The Nixon plan of 1972 stayed in effect until 1978, when President Carter replaced it with

Executive Order 12065.[76] The Carter order continued the trend of previous orders by further restricting classification authority. It declared the government would withhold national security information only if "its unauthorized disclosure reasonably could be expected to cause at least *identifiable* damage to the national security." "Insignificant damage is not a basis for classification." The Carter order was the first to explicitly require declassification be given the same weight as classification. Declassification timetables and schedules were tightened. Most classified documents were to be reviewed for release after six years. Information not released after six years was to be reviewed and released no later than after 20 years.[77] In its most controversial change, the order also said some declassification requests should be granted even if the information sought was properly classified. This should occur when "the need to protect such information may be outweighed by the public interest in the disclosure of the information."[78] This provision came to be called the "balancing test." Carter argued that the balancing test, coupled with the "identifiable damage" requirement, nudged the bureaucracy toward greater disclosure.[79]

The long-term impact of these changes can't be assessed, as the Carter order was overturned by Executive Order 12356, a sweeping measure issued by President Reagan in 1982. Under the Carter order, information was to be withheld only if its release would cause "at least identifiable damage to national security." The Reagan order stated information "shall be classified" if its disclosure "reasonably could be expected to cause damage to the national security."[80] The Reagan order also repealed Carter's balancing test and the provision making classification discretionary. Classification was now to be mandatory if information fell within any classification category. This reversed decades of precedent. Until the Reagan order, every security classification executive order since the Eisenhower order of 1953 had been largely permissive, saying if information met a certain standard, it could be classified.[81]

Reagan's order also eliminated Carter's timetable for declassification, requiring information to remain classified "as long as required by national security considerations." Information marked for declassification under Carter's order would now remain classified until reviewed under the new order. In another change, Reagan's order said information could be reclassified after having been declassification and released, if the information still required protection and could reasonably be recovered. Carter's order prohibited these actions.[85]

President Clinton: Shifting the Burden.

The Clinton administration has taken several steps to speed the release of previously classified information. On Nov. 10, 1994, the president issued Executive order 12937, which declassified in bulk, without individual document review, 45 million pages of documents. (About half of these dated from World War II, but millions dated from the Vietnam War era.)[86] This order was important for three reasons. Initially, it declassified a significant amount of information -- fully 14 percent of the classified holdings of the National Archives. Second, it signaled the administration's intention to follow through with pledges to reduce government secrecy, sending a message to agencies that declassification was a topic of interest at the White House. Finally, the order was important because it ordered documents declassified even if they had not been reviewed. Unless agencies took the effort to justify continued classification, records would be released. This changed the declassification process. Under previous classification executive orders, most documents were not declassified until they had been reviewed. Without a review, they remained classified. Under this Clinton order, documents were to be released unless they were reviewed and approved for continued classification.[87]

The order signaled the beginning of a larger shift that culminated on April 17, 1995, when Clinton signed another, broader executive order. The president predicted this second order, No. 12958, would "lift the veil on millions of existing documents (and) keep a great many future documents from ever being classified." Executive Order 12958 seeks to change the traditional operation of the classification system by making secrecy more disruptive, costly and time-consuming than disclosure. In an effort to make declassification the norm, not the exception, the order states that after five years, most "classified information contained in records that (1) are more than 25 years old, and (2) have been determined to have permanent historical value... shall be automatically declassified *whether or not the records have been reviewed.*" When the order is fully phased in, millions of older documents will be automatically released.[88]

Release without review is the most significant change from the Reagan order and from previous executive orders. By making disclosure the expected result of an agency's information policies, the Clinton plan seeks not just the release of previously classified documents but a revamping of the classification process so that disclosure, not withholding, becomes business as usual. Most older documents will be automatically declassified after 25 years; most newly classified documents after 10 years. If agencies desire classification longer than this, they will need to take specific actions -- involving the commitment of time and resources -- to show that the documents fall within several relatively narrowly defined exemptions.[89]

Requiring document review for continued classification stands in contrast to previous executive orders, which required document review before declassification. The Carter order required documents be reviewed when they became six and then 20 years old. The Reagan order said information remained classified "as long as required by national security considerations."[90] The Clinton order requires extra effort to maintain classification. This change led the director of *Secrecy and Government Bulletin* to call the Clinton order "the first systematic post-Cold War reform of government secrecy policy."[91] A Justice Department memorandum recently sent to federal agencies also emphasizes the significance of this change:

> (I)t alters the administrative dynamic of information classification by requiring agencies to expend more resources for any continued classification of a record, whereas under the old executive order it was often more costly for an agency to undertake declassification... (It) requires agencies to commit resources and to take specific actions within limited time periods if they want

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to maintain classification of records....[92]

ISOO Director Steven Garfinkel, whose office monitors compliance with classification orders, also has praised this change. "The big thing about the new executive order is that the burden has shifted 180 degrees in terms of maintaining the classified status of information." Under previous orders, failure to act meant continued classification. "Now, if an agency does nothing, information will be declassified," he said.[93] The Clinton order will be phased in over five years. During this time, federal agencies will be expected to find older documents still needing classification after a quarter-century, and newer documents needing more than a decade of secrecy. However, in order to ensure this grace period isn't abused, and to assess compliance, the order requires agencies declassify within one year at least 15 percent of the classified documents covered by the order. Additional 15 percent declassifications are required in subsequent years until classified document backlogs have been eliminated.[94] Other provisions of the order include:

▪**Systematic Declassification For Records Not Automatically Declassified.** The Clinton order recognizes some information will require indefinite protection. But to establish a procedure for eventual release of even these records, it requires each agency to establish "a program for systematic declassification review" for records not automatically declassified. The Reagan order made these programs voluntary, except for the National Archives.[95]

▪**Declassified Database.** In a move important to researchers, the new order directs the Archivist and ISOO to establish a comprehensive, governmentwide database of information that has been declassified.[96]

▪**New "Balancing Test."** The new order re-establishes some of the Carter "balancing test." It acknowledges there may be "exceptional cases" in which classified information should still be released because of "public interest in disclosure of the information." Agency heads may voluntarily make this decision. This is similar to Carter's 1978 order, although the test is no longer mandatory and creates no judicial right of review.[97]

▪**Classification Levels/Information Categories.** The new order essentially retains the "Top Secret," "Secret" and "Confidential" markings and the categories of classifiable information of the Reagan order. But the Reagan order presumption that certain information is automatically classified (such as foreign government information) has been eliminated.[98]

▪**Elimination of Agency Pre-Approval For Document Release.** Clinton's order eliminates the "OADR" requirement (Originating Agency's Determination Requirement) that said documents could be released only with the approval of the agency that classified them.[99]

▪**A "When in Doubt - Release" Standard.** Clinton's order states if there is "significant doubt about the need to classify information, it shall not be classified." This is similar to language of the Carter order, which said insignificant damage "is not a basis for classification." The Reagan order required classification in cases of reasonable doubt.[100]

▪**A Reason for Classification Requirement.** The order requires each document include "a concise reason for classification," such as one of the seven classification categories.[101]

▪**No Reclassification Once Released.** Under Reagan's order, reclassification of properly released information was allowed if it still required protection and could be retrieved. This is now prohibited.[102]

▪**Classification of Requested Information.** The new order allows classification or reclassification of unreleased information, after it has been requested under the FOIA, the Privacy Act or the order. This provision was included in the two previous orders.[103]

▪**Challenging Improper Classification.** The order makes it easier for personnel to challenge classifications they believe improper. Such challenges are "encouraged and expected" and retribution for such challenges is prohibited.[104] The previous order contained no such language.

▪**More Public Input.** During the executive order revision process, the Carter and Clinton administrations solicited public comment. The Reagan administration had a more limited process of public and congressional input, relying in large part on advice from intelligence agencies.[105]

Conclusion:

This analysis suggests several conclusions:

I. The security classification system has grown, haphazardly, from a limited operation on the periphery of the armed forces, concerned primarily with protecting defense facilities and personnel, into a permanent executive branch bureaucracy that routinely classifies millions of documents yearly, shaping national policy in numerous ways.

II. Much of the classification system's growth can be attributed to presidential willingness to seize this undeveloped region of policymaking, and a corresponding timidity on the part of Congress in responding to this assertion of power. Although Congress has claimed its right to legislate in this area, and has done so on occasion, it has shown little eagerness to replace the president as the primary architect of the security classification system.

III. Most studies of the classification system conclude too much information is improperly classified. This abuse seems constant, regardless of the party controlling the executive branch.

IV. The Clinton order has the potential to significantly overhaul the security classification system, providing it stays in effect for at least its five-year phase-in period.

I. Growth of the Classification System. A system designed to prevent improper photographs of military forts has grown in a few decades into a significant force within the federal government, shaping national policy. The recent growth of the classification system is best emphasized by its absence during much of the nation's history. The War Department didn't issue orders on this topic until 1869. During and after World War I, what passed for a classification system could still be dismissed as "not a product of any thoughtful consideration of the general problem of protecting defense information...."[106] The system began its metamorphosis in the 1930s, when without express congressional authorization, the military for the first time authorized withholding political data.

The system expanded quickly. By World War II, "restriction labels knew no bounds (and) could be applied to virtually any type of defense or non-defense information."[107] By 1940, Roosevelt assumed control of the system, but his executive order still cited legislation to justify his action. By 1951, Truman had dropped this reference to congressional sharing of responsibility and given classification authority to every executive branch agency, civilian and military. Most executive orders since Truman's have tried to limit the classification system,[108] at times successfully. During the Eisenhower administration 1.5 million persons had authority to classify information; today 5,461 persons have that power.[109] Total classification actions, which increased in the 1980s, appear to be dropping.[110] Yet these reductions, while important, emphasize that the system remains cumbersome and subject to abuse.[111]

1. The Role of Congress. Focusing just on the classification system's history and growth obscures a more fundamental problem. Blocking the flow of information to Congress prevents that body from fulfilling its constitutional role. There have been numerous calls for Congress to draft its own classification system. In 1973, the Supreme Court even criticized Congress for not taking this step, noting: "Congress could certainly have provided that the Executive Branch adopt new procedures (for classifying information) or it could have established its own procedures..."[112] The same year, a House committee issued a report strongly recommending "that legislation providing for a statutory security classification system should be considered and enacted by Congress."[113] Congress has not taken this step. Legislators, noting that presidents back to Roosevelt have claimed a right to exercise at least some control in this area, have tried to avoid the constitutional crisis a legislatively crafted classification system would likely spark. Nonetheless, there is still support for a larger role for Congress. A 1985 study by two House subcommittees, suggested Congress consider legislatively replacing the categories of "Top Secret," "Secret," and "Confidential," with a new, two-tiered system containing just "high-level security data," and "confidential data." [114]

Despite calls for legislative involvement in the security classification system, Congress has been hesitant to act boldly, in most cases following the president's lead. This has strengthened the presidency at the expense of the Congress. Rather than seeking a direct confrontation with the president, most legislators have sought compromise. The most notable example of this is the Freedom of Information Act. The FOIA states documents created by executive branch agencies are presumed to be releasable, unless they fall under one of nine exemptions -- with the burden of proof resting on the government. The FOIA's first amendment allows withholding documents:

> specifically authorized under criteria established by an Executive order to be kept secret in the interest of national defense or foreign policy and (b) are in fact properly classified pursuant to such Executive order.[115]

This exemption left drafting of the classification system largely in the executive branch. It was, in effect, congressional recognition of the power the presidency assumed in 1940. Yet the exemption's wording established that only documents properly classified under a valid executive order could be withheld. Further, by even drafting an amendment on this topic, Congress served notice it could also draft a narrower amendment. This amendment thus establishes an important precedent. It states that future options remain open.[116]

III. Abuse of the Classification System. The most telling argument in support of carefully defining and limiting the security classification system is the litany of its many abuses. Repeated studies and experts have concluded too much has been classified, for too long, often under dubious circumstances, regardless of which party is in power:

▪In 1956, the Coolidge Committee concluded classification abuses "have reached serious proportions."[117]

▪In 1957, the Wright Commission urged abolishing the "abused and overused" confidential classification.[118]

In 1962, congressional investigators called the existing classification system "a perversion of true security."[119]

▪In 1971 congressional testimony, former Defense Department Chief Classification Officer William G. Florence said 99.5 percent of all classified documents could be released without harming the nation's security.[120]

▪In 1982, another look at the system concluded "overclassification ... continues to be a serious problem."[121]

▪In 1985, a report by two congressional subcommittees concluded: "Too much information is classified... Only a fraction of the information classified is of a military nature and of value to the Soviets... All too often, documents are classified to protect politically embarrassing information or to hire government misconduct."[122]

▪In 1994, a joint CIA-Pentagon commission concluded "the classification system, largely unchanged since the Eisenhower Administration, has grown out of control."[123]

▪Also in 1994, a study prepared for the National Archives and ISOO concluded: "(A)gencies are still creating more classified pages than they are declassifying... (T)here are significant backlogs of unsatisfied requests for information under the FOIA."[124]

IV. The Clinton Order: President Clinton has avoided some of the actions of earlier presidents that impeded the effectiveness of their security classification orders. By releasing 45 million pages of documents, issuing an executive order that makes declassification easier than classification, and reopening doors to Congress, the president sent federal classifiers the message that revamping the classification system was an administration goal. Presidents have not always sent such uncomplicated messages, nor backed them with action. Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Nixon all issued or modified executive orders intended to reign in the classification system. But Eisenhower followed his order with the McCarthy letter, encouraging if not requiring secrecy. Eisenhower also insisted the modifications to the 1789 housekeeping act didn't apply to him. Kennedy urged press censorship and harshly criticized leakers. Nixon's order misconstrued the FOIA, threatened leakers with jail and expanded classification. These contradictory actions by earlier presidents sent mixed messages to the agencies charged with implementing classification orders. Arguably, they had a chilling effect on a system where classifiers were required to expend extra time and effort before declassification could occur. In light of what could only be perceived as presidential caution, this extra effort did not always materialize.

It is too early to fully appraise the new executive order. Should Clinton be defeated in his reelection bid, his order may be replaced by one issued by a president of a different philosophy, much as Reagan quickly overturned Carter's order. To evaluate Clinton's order, it must be monitored for at least its five-year phase-in period. Yet initial assessments suggest that, given time, Executive Order 12958 may open up the security classification system.

1. The Information Security Oversight Office reports there were 17,532,117 original and derivative classification decisions during 1992, 1993, and 1994. If each action represents the classification of information equivalent to a 1/6th-inch thick document (a conservative estimate), then the classifications that occurred in 1992, 1993 and 1994 were equivalent to producing a stack of classified paper 91,313 feet high. (Classification totals for fiscal year 1995 have not been released.)

Information Security Oversight Office, *1994 Report To The President*, (Washington, 1995), 21; *1993 Report*, p. 22; *1992 Report*, p. 16.

2. *Executive Order 12958* was issued by President Bill Clinton on April 17, 1995. It took effect on Oct. 14, 1995.

Executive Order 12958, Classified National Security Information. 60 Federal Register 76, 20 April 1995, 19825-19843; Sections 1.6(d); 3.4(b).

3. *Executive Order 12958* was issued by President Bill Clinton on April 17, 1995. It took effect on Oct. 14, 1995.

Executive Order 12958, Classified National Security Information. 60 Federal Register 76, 20 April 1995, 19825-19843; Sections 1.6(d); 3.4(b).

4. *Executive Order 12356, National Security Information*. 47 Federal Register 66, 6 April 1982, 14874-14884. Section 1.4.

Issued by President Reagan on 2 April 1982, this order set guidelines for federal agencies for more than 13 years. When issued, it generated criticism from Congress, the press and open government advocates. For discussion, see:

U.S. Congress, House Committee on Government Operations, Government Information and Individual Rights Subcommittee, *Hearings on Executive Order On Security Classification*, 97th Cong., 2d Sess., 1982.

5. U.S. Foreign Affairs Division, Legislative Reference Service, Library of Congress, *Security Classification As A Problem In The Congressional Role In Foreign Policy: Prepared For The Use Of The Committee On Foreign Relations*, (Washington, 1971), 1.

6. "Top Secret" first appeared as a classification marking in *Executive Order 10104*, issued by Truman on 1 Feb. 1950.

Executive Order 10104, Definitions of Vital Military and Naval Installations and Equipment, 15 Federal Register 597, 1 Feb. 1950.

See, also: *Security Classification As A Problem*, 1-4.

7. Constitutional Convention delegate James Madison, an advocate of open government, nevertheless supported holding the convention's meetings behind closed doors.

1 Records of the Federal Convention of 1787, 15-17, ed. Max Farrand (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1937).

It is worth nothing that Article I, section 5, clause 3 of the Constitution permits Congress to withhold journal entries requiring secrecy, while Article I, section 9, clause 7 allows Congress to withhold details of certain secret expenditures, such as for spying.

8. Dallas D. Irvine, *Origin of Defense-Information Markings in the Army and Former War Department: Report Prepared for U.S. General Services Administration, National Archives and Records Service*, (Washington, 1972) 2.

9. *Congressional Record*, 85th Cong., 1st sess., 16 May 1957, S2972, S6345; 85th Cong., 2d sess., 15 April 1958, S6345.

10. This infuriated some Northern generals, while prompting Robert E. Lee to become a faithful reader of northern publications.

James G. Randall, *Constitutional Problems Under Lincoln*, (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1964), 484-510.

11. Headquarters of the Army, Adjutant General's Office, General Orders No. 35, April 13, 1869, listed in Annex A, in *Origin of Defense-Information Markings*, 3.

12. U.S., Congress, Senate Select Committee To Study Government Operations With Respect To Intelligence Activities, *Supplementary Reports On Intelligence Activities, Book VI*. 94th Cong., 2d sess., 1976, S. Rept. 94-755, 315, 316.

13. *Origin of Defense-Information Markings*, 11-12.

14. The system was slightly modified four years later, when the War Department issued Army Regulations No. 30.

Ibid, 9-10; 17.

15. "Secret" documents contained the most critical military information. Further, the documents were to be "for the personal information of the individual to whom it is officially entrusted, and of those officers under him whose duties it affects (and) the existence of such a document or map will not be disclosed."

Quoted in: *Ibid*, 27-28; 24-25.

It is worth noting that during World War I Congress could have but did not give the armed forces specific authority to classify national security information. The closest it came to taking this action was with enactment of a 1917 measure giving the president and the commissioner of patents authority to keep defense-related patent applications secret. A congressional committee later concluded this patent secrecy act "appears to be the first direct statutory grant of authority to the Chief Executive to declare a type of information secret.

U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Government Operations, *Security Classification Policy and Executive Order 12356*, 97th Cong., 2d sess., 1982, H. Rept. 97-731, 5.

16. The security classification definitions, amended in February, November, and December of 1917 were amended again in February, 1918. By 1921, when Army Regulations 330-5 formally continued the classification system, military personnel were instructed that "Secret" should be stamped only on information "of great importance and when the safeguarding of that information from actual or potential enemies is of prime necessity."

Origin of Defense-Information Markings, 32-37; 34.

17. In 1935, the War Department added a fourth information marking, "restricted," designed to protect military research. The next year the department eliminated "For Official Use

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Only," leaving three classification markings: "Secret," "Confidential," and "Restricted." *Ibid*, 38.

18. For a discussion of this point, see:
Security Classification Policy and Executive Order 12356, 5; 6.

19. U.S., Congress, Senate Select Committee To Study Government Operations With Respect To Intelligence Activities, *Supplementary Reports On Intelligence Activities, Book VI*, 94th Cong., 2d sess., 1976, S. Rept. 94-755, 325; 326.

20. Violation of the law could result in a $1,000 fine and/or a year's imprisonment.
The act of January 12, 1938 (Public Law 418, 75th Cong., 52 Stat. 3 (1938).
Congressional Record, 76th Cong., 1st sess., 5 Jan. 1938, 83, pt. 1: 70-72.

21. Press conference of Feb. 21, 1941.
The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Compiled by Samuel I. Rosenman, "1941: The Call To Battle Stations." (New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1950), 30.

22. *Congressional Record*, 78th Cong., 1st sess., 23 March 1943, H2390-2408; 31 March 1943, H2780-99; 2 April 1943, H2877, 2878-95.

23. Executive Order 8381 contained four central provisions:
▪It cited the 1938 law as statutory authority.
▪It defined the covered installations and equipment.
▪It emphasized the president's control over the classification system by extended classification authority to "all official military or naval books, pamphlets, documents, reports, maps, charts, plans, designs, models, drawings, photographs, contracts or specifications," already classified.
▪It included a section (repeated three times) saying classification authority could be extended to "all such articles or equipment which may hereafter be so marked with the approval or at the direction of the President."
Executive Order 8381, Defining Certain Vital Military And Naval Installations And Equipment, 5 Federal Register, 26 March 1940, 1145. Preamble; Sections 1, 2, 3.

24. "A forerunner of subsequent classification orders," the OWI's regulation provided classification category definitions, identified who could classify information and warned against overclassification. This was a significant expansion of presidential power (albeit one allegedly resting on a congressional grant of authority), that in effect created a security classification bureaucracy in the executive branch largely under the president's control. It was also a power that was abused. As a congressional study three decades later concluded, in the 1940s federal agencies were "rather cavalier" in their attitudes toward secrecy and the system was "by and large erratic and lax."

U.S. Congress, House Foreign Operations and Government Information Subcommittee, Government Operations Committee, *Executive Classification Of Information -- Security Classification Problems Involving Exemptions (b) (1) Of The Freedom Of Information Act (5 USC 552)*, 93d Cong., 1st sess., 1973, H. Rept. 93-221, 7; 13.

25. Among measures cited to bolster congressional claims of authority in this area were the housekeeping act of 1789, the 1898 codification of War Department orders, the 1911 and 1917 Espionage Acts, the 1917 Patent Act, and even Senate Bill 1485 enacted in 1938. Each emphasized congressional will to legislate in matters relating to classification of government information.

26. "Top Secret" provided an American equivalent to the British "Most Secret" security classification marking.

Executive Order 10104, Definitions of Vital Military and Naval Installations and Equipment, 15 Federal Register, 1 Feb. 1950, 597.

27. *Executive Order 10290, Prescribing Regulations Establishing Minimum Standards for the Classification, Transmission and Handling, by Departments and Agencies of the Executive Branch, of Official Information Which Requires Safeguarding in the Interest of the Security of the United States*, 16 Federal Register, 27 Sept. 1951, 9795.

28. *Executive Order 10290.*

29. The 1789 measure, off-handedly enacted by the first Congress to facilitate agency bookkeeping, gave agencies nominal control over internal records.

The term "national defense" appears in the introductory first paragraph of both Executive Order 8381 and Executive Order 10104.

Truman's second order also defined the classification categories to be used. This, too, was a first, although listing the categories did little to improve their specificity. "Top Secret," for instance, was to be applied to information whose release could cause "exceptionally grave danger to the national security."

Security Classification Problems Involving Exemption (b) (1), 8-9.

Security Classification Policy and Executive Order 12356, 8.

Executive Order 10290, Section IV 25(b).

30. *Congressional Record*, 82d Cong., 1st Sess., 9 Oct. 1951, S12853-12854.

Richard Nixon, then a young congressman, had criticized Truman earlier, warning that no president should be allowed to arbitrarily control the flow of information to Congress. Had earlier administrations possessed such power, the president "could have arbitrarily issued an executive order in the (Bennett) Meyers case, the Teapot Dome case, or in any other case denying the Congress of the United States information it needed to conduct an investigation..."

Congressional Record, 80th Cong., 2d sess., 22 April 1948, H4783.

31. *Congressional Record*, 82d Cong., 1st Sess., 28 September 1951, 12555.

See, also: U.S., Congress., House Committee on Government Operations, *Safeguarding Official Information in the Interests of the Defense of the United States (The Status of Executive Order 10501)*, 87th Cong., 2d sess, 1962, H. Rept. 2456.

32. The report said that the laws, in this instance, were those sections of the Federal Criminal Code which are concerned with internal security and the safeguarding of classified and security information, in particular, and espionage, in general.

Ibid., p. 31.

33. U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments. *Staff memorandum No. 82-1-60*, 82d Cong., 1st sess., 29 November 1951. (Reprinted in U.S. Congress, House Committee on Government Operations, *Safeguarding Official Information In The Interests Of The Defense Of The United States (The Status of Executive Order 10501)*, 87th Cong. 2d sess., 21 September 1962, 27-35; 27.

The report said that the laws to be faithfully executed were those sections of the Federal Criminal Code which are concerned with internal security and the safeguarding of classified and security information, in particular, and espionage, in general.

34. Truman's 1951 action also sparked public debate. A New York Times editorial called the order "broad in its powers but vague in its definitions." The Associated Press Managing Editors organization, issued a resolution criticizing the order "For giving classifying authority to civilian agencies not in need of it; for vagueness in definitions of categories; for absence of any system for reviewing classification decisions; and for lack of any appeals procedure."

"Classifying Information," *The New York Times*, Editorial, 28 Sept. 1951, p. 30.

"Truman on Security," *The New York Times*, Editorial, 30 Sept. 1951, 2B.

APME Resolution reprinted in Richard L. Worsnop, *Secrecy in Government*, in Editorial Research Reports (Washington: Editorial Research Reports, 1971), 2: 644.

35. In 1930, shortly before Roosevelt's election, federal expenditures totaled $3.1 billion. By 1940, the year Roosevelt issued the first security classification executive order, federal expenditures were $9.6 billion.

U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1970, Part 2*, (Washington, 1972), 1102; 1105.

36. Congressional measures ratifying presidential power in this area included the espionage laws, the National Security Act of 1947, the Internal Security Act of 1950, and the Atomic Energy Act of 1954.

Security Classification as a Problem, 13.

37. 1952 Republican Party Platform, *National Party Platforms*, compiled by Donald Bruce Johnson (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1976) Vol. I, 504.

The issue of executive branch control of information came into clearer focus shortly after Eisenhower's election. In April of 1953, Harold Cross, an attorney, legal historian (and former counsel to the New York Herald-Tribune) published The People's Right To Know: Legal Access to Public Records and Proceedings. The ASNE distributed copies of the Cross study, which was cited in editorials and congressional hearings as justification for revamping federal information policy.

Harold L. Cross, *The People's Right To Know: Legal Access To Public Records and Proceedings* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1953).

Also: Samuel J. Archibald, "The Freedom of Information Act Revisited," *Public Administration Review*, (July/August 1979) 313.

38. *Security Classification Problems Involving Exemption (b) (1)*, 9-10.

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39. Statement of President Dwight D. Eisenhower on issuing Executive Order 10501. Nov. 10, 1953. *18 Federal Register No. 220 (Nov. 10, 1953) 7049.*

40. Worsnop, "Secrecy in Government," 644.

41. U.S. Congress, House Committee on Government Operations, *Commission on Government Security: Hearings before the Subcommittee on Reorganization of the Senate Committee on Government Operations*, 84th Cong., 1st Sess., 1955, 30 (Testimony of Assistant Attorney General William F. Tompkins.)
Additional discussion: Worsnop, 644.

42. Under the new order, Secret" was to be stamped on defense documents whose unauthorized disclosure "could result in exceptionally grave damage to the Nation such as leading to a definite break in diplomatic relations affecting the defense of the United States, an armed attack against the United States or its allies, a war, or the compromise of military or defense plans, or intelligence operations, or scientific or technological developments vital to the national defense."

Executive Order 10501, "Safeguarding Official Information in the Interests of the Defense of the United States," 18 Federal Register, 9 Nov. 1953, vol. 18, p. 7049 et seq.

Also: *Security Classification Policy and Executive Order 12356*, 8-9.

43. The order would be replaced by President Nixon in 1972.

U.S. Congress, House Committee on Government Operations, *U.S. Government Information Policies and Practices -- Security Classification Problems Involving Subsection (b)(1) Of The Freedom Of Information Act (Part 7), Hearings Before A Subcommittee Of The Committee on Government Operations*, 92d Cong., 2d sess., 1972, 2930.

44. U.S. Congress, House Committee on Government Operations, *Safeguarding Official Information in the Interests of the Defense of the United States (The Status of Executive Order 10501)*, 87th Cong., 2d sess., 1962, H. Rept. 2456, 37.

45. *Security Classification Policy And Executive Order 12356*, 9.

46. U.S., Congress, Senate, *Report of the Commission on Government Security* (The Wright Commission), S. Doc. 64, 85th Cong., 1st sess., 1957, 177.

The historian Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., later concluded the Eisenhower order "...provided no effective control over the stampers and no workable method for the declassification of documents once they had passed into the system... Eisenhower, though his instinct was good, did nothing to moderate the system. The sense of crisis was too great; Congress, except for Moss and Hennings, was too docile; the power secrecy conferred on presidents was too irresistible."

Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Imperial Presidency* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1973), 340; 342.

47. President Dwight D. Eisenhower, "Letter to the Secretary of Defense Directing Him To Withhold Certain Information from the Senate Committee on Government Operations, May 17, 1954," *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1954.* (Washington: US GPO, 1960), 483-484.

48. U.S. Congress, House Committee on Government Operations, *Availability of Information from Federal Departments and Agencies*, 84th Cong., 1st sess., (Vol I), 1955, 32.

49. *Report of the Commission on Government Security*, 154-177.

50. U.S., Department of Defense, Committee on Classified Information. *Report to the Secretary of Defense by the Committee on Classified Information, Department of Defense, 1956*. ("The Coolidge Committee"), 24-31.

51. The Defense Department did issue a directive consolidating previous directives on classification, and suggested disciplinary action for overclassification. But as a 1973 report noted, "there is no evidence of (disciplinary action) ever having been used."
Security Classification Problems Involving Exemption (b)(1), 17.

52. The Defense Department, for instance, issued a directive in 1955 stating information released to the public would be limited to records making "a constructive contribution" to DOD's mission.
Comments of Deputy Assistant Defense Secretary for Public Affairs Karl Honaman, quoted in: James R. Wiggins, *Freedom or Secrecy* (Revised ed.) (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964) 109.

53. U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Government Operations, *Availability of Information from Federal Departments and Agencies (Part XII)*, 84th Cong., 2d Sess., 1956, 3027.

54. *Availability of Information*, XVII:4256.

55. *Congressional Record*, 85th Cong., 1st sess., 29 Jan. 1957), p. S1063.

56. *Congressional Record*, 85th Cong., 2d sess., 15 April 1958, S6345.

57. *Statement by the President Upon Signing Bill Relating to the Authority of Federal Agencies to Withhold Information and Records*, 12 August 1958, Dwight D. Eisenhower, in Public Papers, 1958: 601.

58. Democratic Party Platform of 1960, *National Party Platforms (Vol II)*, compiled by Donald Bruce Johnson (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1978) 595.

59. Press Conference in *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States. John F. Kennedy, 1961*. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1962), 312-313.
Discussed by Kennedy Press Secretary Pierre Salinger in, *With Kennedy* (New York: Avon Books, paperback, 1966), 196-210; 358-360.
Note: During the Cuban Missile Crisis, Kennedy asked the nation's media not to print certain news.

60. *Executive Order 10964, Safeguarding Official Information in the Interests of the Defense of the United States, Amendment of Executive Order 10501*, 26 Federal Register, 20 Sept. 1961, 6932. Discussed in:

Supplementary Reports on Intelligence Activities, Book VI, 340-342.
The Evolution of Government Information Security Classification Policy, 55-57.
Security Classification Problems Involving Exemption (b)(1), 25.

61. U.S. Congress, House Committee on Government Operations, *Availability of Information From Federal Departments and Agencies*, 87th Cong., 1st sess., 1961, H. Rept. 1257.

Also: *Security Classification Problems Involving Exemption (b)(1), 25.*

62. As a congressional committee later concluded: "The incidental assignment to a busy assistant of responsibility for the appeals procedure along with his many other duties does not fill the need for an effective system to handle public appeals against secrecy abuses."

Security Classification Problems Involving Exemption (b)(1), 27.

63. *Safeguarding Official Information ... The Status Of...*, 13.
See, also: *Supplementary Reports on Intelligence Activities, Book VI*, 342.
Also: *Security Classification Problems Involving Exemption (b)(1)*, 25; 27.

64. Sen. Edward Long, speaking for Senate Bill 1666, *Congressional Record*, 87th Cong., 2d sess., 24 June 1962, S9946; S9961-9962.

65. Senate Bill 1160, "To Amend Section 3 of the Administrative Procedures Act, Chapter 324, of the Act of June 11, 1956, (60 Stat. 238), to Clarify and Protect the Right of the Public to Obtain Information, and for Other Purposes," *Congressional Record*, 89th Cong., 2d sess., 13 Oct. 1965, S26820-S26821; and 20 June 1966, S13640-13662.

66. Freedom of Information Act, 5 USC 552 (b).

67. U.S. Congress, House Committee on Government Operations, *Clarifying and Protecting the Right of the Public to Information*, 89th Cong., 2d sess., 1966, H. Rept. 1497, 9.

68. The law, strengthened in 1974, has in the opinion of some scholars "matured into a respected, sturdy and effective statute."

Harold Relyea, "The Freedom of Information Act in America: A Profile," *Access to Government Records: International Perspectives and Trends*, ed. Tom Riley (London: Chartwell-Bratt, 1986) 17.

69. U.S. Congress, House Foreign Operations and Government Information Subcommittee, Committee on Government Operations, *Hearings on U.S. Government Information Policies and Practices: Security Classification Problems Involving Subsection (b) (1) of the Freedom of Information Act -- Part 7*, 92nd Cong., 2d sess., 1972, 2308-2328.

Note: President Nixon also asked Congress for a $636,000 supplemental appropriation to speed declassification of World War II records. (The funds enabled the General Services Administration to help the National Archives.) However, at the same time Nixon established the interagency committee, he also secretly established the plumbers, a group charged with plugging government information leaks by more direct means. When Rehnquist was later appointed to the Supreme Court, he was replaced by David Young, an assistant to the National Security Council who also was a member of the plumbers.

See: *Supplementary Reports on Intelligence Activities, Book VI,* 345-346.

And: *Security Classification Problems Involving Exemption (b)(1),* 31.

70. Executive Order 11652 was issued by President Richard Nixon on March 8, 1972, and became effective June 1, 1972.

Executive Order 11652: Classification and Declassification of National Security Information and Material. 37 Federal Register 5200, 10 March 1972.

The Nixon administration announced that the number of executive departments and agencies authorized to classify had been reduced from 37 to 25, exclusive of the Executive Office of the President. Also, 31,000 federal officials previously authorized to classify documents lost that authority.

Security Classification Problems Involving Exemption (b)(1), 68; 70-80.

See, also: William G. Phillips, "The Government's Classification System," *None of Your Business.* (New York: Penguin Books, 1975), 75-79.

71. *Executive Order 11652,* preamble; third paragraph.

Discussed in: *Security Classification Problems Involving Exemption (b)(1),* 60.

Also: *Supplementary Reports on Intelligence Activities, Book VI,* 347.

72. *Supplementary Reports on Intelligence Activities, Book VI,* 346.

Also, see: *Security Classification Problems Involving Exemption (b)(1),* 60-66.

73. *Security Classification Problems Involving Exemption (b)(1),* 68.

74. In light of the 1972 survey, legislators concluded that while "both the old and new orders warn against such actions ... it has been painfully clear to this committee that such has not done much good in the past."

U.S. Congress, House Foreign Operations and Government Information Subcommittee. *U.S. Government Information Policies and Practices -- Security Classification Problems Involving Subsection (b)(1) of the Freedom of Information Act - Part 7,* 92d Cong., 2d sess., 1972, table at pp. 2935-2937.

75. ISOO, *1979 Report To The President,* 13.

76. *Executive Order 12065, National Security Information.* 43 Federal Register 28949, 2 July, 1978.

77. *Executive Order 12065,* sections 1-302; 1-401; 1-402; 3-301. (Note: Under the order, foreign government information could be classified for up to 30 years.)

See, also: *Security Classification Policy and Executive Order 12356,* 11.

78. *Executive Order 12065,* section 3-303.

79. All classification decisions implicitly require an assessment of whether information meets a certain threshold. Yet Carter's order was the first to explicitly require that the public benefit resulting from the release of classified information be considered. Secrecy was explicitly required to be weighed against disclosure and, if the benefits of disclosure seemed paramount,

then even properly classified documents were to be released. Critics who argued that previous executive orders kept too much information classified for too long called the balancing test "one of the most important innovations in the Carter order."

See: Morton Halperin, "Increasing Government Secrecy: Revising the Classification Order," *First Principles*, Nov/Dec, 1981.

Also: *Security Classification Policy and Executive Order 12356*, 12.

Backing up the Carter order was a memorandum by Attorney General Griffin Bell, acknowledging agencies had in the past routinely received Justice Department help when fighting the release of classified information under the FOIA -- assistance critics said encouraged agencies to resist disclosure. Bell's memo changed the ground rules, saying the Justice Department would intervene in FOIA lawsuits "only when disclosure is demonstrably harmful even if the documents technically fall within the exemptions."

U.S. Attorney General Griffin B. Bell, *Memorandum to Heads of All Federal Departments and Agencies*, (Washington: 5 May 1977).

80. *Executive Order 12356*, section 1.3(b).

84. *Executive Order 12356*, section 1.3(b).

Executive Order 12065, section 1-101.

According to Deputy Assistant Attorney General Richard Willard, in 1982 congressional testimony, "While the provision was never intended to introduce mandatory (review) requirement for proper classification, plaintiffs have been able to argue, not without some success, that it was so intended, and that the courts could properly review and even overrule the agency's decision whether to balance..."

Executive Order on Security Classification, 141.

85. *Executive Order 12056*, sections 1-606; 1-607.
Executive Order 12356, sections 1.4(a); 1.4(c); 1.6(c).

86. Executive Order 12937 was issued by President Bill Clinton on Nov. 10, 1994; taking effect immediately, although the Archivist of the United States was given 30 days to make the declassified papers available for public research.

Executive Order 12937 Of Nov. 10, 1994, Declassification of Selected Records Within the National Archives of the United States. 59 Federal Register No. 219 (Nov. 15, 1994) 59097.

Also: ISOO, *1994 Report To The President*, 5-9.

87. *Executive Order 12937*, section 2.

ISOO Director Steve Garfinkel has called this provision of the new executive order "a very radical change," adding "I'm not sure everyone has appreciated how big a change it is yet."

Steve Garfinkel, personal interview, 29 February 1996.

88. Executive Order 12958 was issued by President Bill Clinton on April 17, 1995. It took effect on Oct. 14, 1995.

Executive Order 12958, Classified National Security Information, 60 Federal Register 76, 20 April 1995, 19825-19843, especially Section 3.4.

Some observers predict "the near-term declassification of hundreds of millions of pages of Cold War documents. See: *Secrecy & Government Bulletin*: 1.

President Clinton quoted in U.S., Department of Justice, Office of Information and

Privacy, "New Executive Order on Classification of National Security Information Issued," *FOIA UPDATE*, Vol. XVI (Spring/Summer 1995), No. 2, 2.

89. Documents exempt from 25-year automatic declassification include those whose release

would identify intelligence sources; assist the development of weapons of mass destruction; threaten U.S. codes; reveal war technologies; reveal U.S. war plans; seriously harm U.S. foreign policy; reduce the protection now give the president and top federal officials; impair national security emergency preparedness, or violate treaty or international agreements.

Executive Order 12958, Section 3.4(b).

Newer documents are exempt from the 10-year automatic declassification schedule if they fall into approximately the same categories as those listed above.

Executive Order 12958, Section 1.6(d).

Exceptions must be approved by the Interagency Security Classification Appeals Panel, which can modify or reject the request. The panel also will be able to hear complaints from requesters who were denied documents as well as requests from agencies seeking continued classification.

Executive Order 12958, Section 3.4.

90. *Executive Order 12065*, Sections 1-401; 1-402.

Note: Carter's systematic review was criticized by the General Accounting Office in 1980 as not cost effective. See: *Systematic Review for Declassification of National Security Information -- Do Benefits Exceed Costs?* (Washington: GAO, 1980).

Note, also, that under the Reagan order, agencies were not required to determine when a document would be released until it had been reviewed by the National Archives.

Executive Order 12356, section 1.4.

91. Steven Aftergood, "New Executive Order Signed," *Secrecy & Government Bulletin* 48, (May, 1995):1.

92. *FOIA UPDATE*, Vol. XVI (Spring/Summer 1995), No. 2, 1; 11.

93. *Ibid.*, 15.

94. *Executive Order 12958*, Section 3.4.

95. *Executive Order 12958*, Section 3.5(a).
Executive Order 12356, Section 3.3.

96. *Executive Order 12958*, Section 3.8.

97. *Ibid.*, Section 3.2(b). (The language of this provision suggests that on this point the Clinton Administration agrees with the Reagan Administration, which argued that the initial Carter balancing test created unjustified litigation by encouraging lawsuits by unsuccessful requesters.)

98. The categories concern, briefly: military plans or weapons, foreign governments, intelligence activities, foreign relations, scientific matters relating to the national security, programs for safeguarding nuclear materials or facilities, systems or installations relating to the national security.

Ibid, Sections 1.3 and 1.5.

See, also: Sections 1.2(b) and 1.6(d)(5).

99.*Ibid.*, Section 1.7.

See, also: *Executive Order 12356*, section 1.5.

Critics charged this requirement allowed agencies unnecessary control over the release of sensitive or embarrassing information. For a discussion of this point, see: Tim Weiner, "President Moves to End Secrecy On Millions of U.S. Documents," *The New York Times*, 5 May 1993, A1; A10.

100. *Executive Order 12958*, Section 1.2(b).

Executive Order 12065, Sections 3-301; 3-301; 3-303.

Executive Order 12356, Section 1.1(c).

101. *Executive Order 12958*, Section 1.6(d).

102. *Executive Order 12958*, Section 1.8(c), and *Executive Order 12356*, Section 1.6(c).

103. But the Clinton order, like Carter's 1978 order, allows this only with the personal participation of top agency officials. The Reagan order allowed lower-level personnel to reclassify.

Executive Order 12958, Section 1.8(d); 1.6(c).

See, also: *Security Classification Policy and Executive Order 12356*, 21-24.

104. *Executive Order 12958*, Section 1.9.

105. See: *FOIA UPDATE*, 1.

Also: *Security Classification Policy and Executive Order 12356*, 28-35.

106. *Origin of Defense-Information Markings*, 32-37.

107. *Supplementary Reports on Intelligence Activities*, Book VI, 325.

108. The one exception, arguably, was Executive Order 12356, issued by President Reagan in 1982.

109. The 1.5 million estimate was that of the 1957 Wright Commission.

The more recent estimate is contained in: ISOO, *1994 Report to the President*, 15.

110. See: ISOO, *Report to the President* (1980-1994).

111. In 1994, the Office of Management and Budget reported the government spent more than $2.2 billion yearly just to guard existing documents and materials that were classified.

U.S. Office of Management and Budget, *Cost Estimates for Classification Related*

Activities, FY 1994 (Washington: OMB, 31 March 1994) 3.

112. *EPA v. Mink*, 93 S.Ct. 827, 1973.

113. *Security Classification Problems Involving Exemption (b) (1)*, 102.

See, also: U.S. Congress, House Government Operations Subcommittee for Operations and Government Information, *Security Classification Reform, Hearings on HR 12004*, 93 Cong., 2d sess., 1974, 289-295.

114. U.S. Congress, House Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights, Committee on the Judiciary; and, House Subcommittee on Civil Service, Committee on the Post Office and Civil Service, *Preliminary Joint Staff Study On the Protection Of National Secrets*, 99th Cong. 1st sess. 1985, 10.

For a discussion of steps Congress might take to rein in the classification system, see:

Frederick M. Kaiser, *Initiatives Congress Might Consider To Reduce Overclassification*, (Washington: Congressional Research Service, 3 March 1988).

115. Freedom of Information Act, 5 USC 552, (b) (1) (A).

116. Enactment of the 1974 FOIA provisions relating to national security, while less restrictive than some members of Congress wanted, still prompted sharp executive branch opposition. President Nixon threatened to veto the amendments, but resigned before they came to a vote. President Gerald Ford did veto the amendments, but his veto was overridden.

Congressional Record, 93d Cong., 2d sess., 20 Nov. 1974, H36623 - H36630; and 21 Nov. 1974, S36866 - S36882.

117. Report to the Secretary of Defense by the Committee on Classified Information.

118. *Report of the Commission on Government Security*, 154-177.

119. *Safeguarding Official Information*... 13.

120. Florence testimony reprinted in *Security Classification As A Problem In The Congressional Role in Foreign Policy*, 31.

121. *Security Classification and Executive Order 12356*, 3.

122. Preliminary Joint Staff Study On The Protection of National Secrets, 3.

123. Joint Security Commission, *Redefining Security*. (Washington: Joint Security Commission, 28 Feb.1994), 7.

124. Howard E. Clark et al., *Interagency Declassification Support System: Estimated Costs and Implementation Considerations* (McLean, Virginia: MITRE, October 1994), 1-1.

GLAAD to Be Gay: A Survey of the Media Activist Strategies of the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation

By

Dr. Jack Banks
School of Communication
University of Hartford
200 Bloomfield Avenue
West Hartford, CT 06117

Phone: (860) 768-5277
Fax: (860) 768-4096
Internet: JBANKS@UHAVAX.HARTFORD.EDU

Paper to be presented in the Lesbian, Gay and
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annual meeting in Anaheim, California, August 10-13, 1996

Abstract

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By

Dr. Jack Banks
School of Communication
University of Hartford
200 Bloomfield Avenue
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Phone: (860) 768-5277
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The objectives and strategies of the San Francisco Bay Area chapter of the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation are examined through extensive interviews with the current and past executive directors of the organization. These subjects explain how GLAAD attempts to encourage more representative, fair and diverse portrayals of gays in media. The major strategies used by this group to influence mainstream media outlets are surveyed. GLAAD relies on persuasion tactics that are both conciliatory like educational meetings with media executives and confrontational such as street demonstrations and advertiser boycotts. The interview subjects respond to criticism that GLAAD acts as a censor of media content. GLAAD's actions against two San Francisco radio stations are surveyed.

GLAAD to Be Gay: A Survey of the Media Activist Strategies of the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation

The mass media has been a major target of gay activists because of the often derogatory images of gays and lesbians in mainstream media content. These activists charge that such portrayals have nurtured homophobic attitudes in society at large and fostered self-loathing by gays and lesbians. The major organization that has challenged these portrayals in print, broadcasting and film in the late 1980s and 1990s has been the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD). Following a brief survey of earlier gay media activism, this paper focuses on the current work of a major GLAAD affiliate. The objectives and strategies of the San Francisco Bay Area chapter of GLAAD are examined through interviews with the organization's past and present executive directors. These participants explain how GLAAD attempts to encourage more representative, fair and diverse portrayals of gays in media content. The major strategies used by this group to influence mainstream media outlets are surveyed. GLAAD relies on persuasion tactics that are both conciliatory like educational meetings with media executives and confrontational such as street demonstrations and advertiser boycotts. The interview subjects respond to criticism that GLAAD acts as a censor of media content and discuss whether GLAAD is still needed today given the increased quantity of gay portrayals in television and film.

Gay Activists Challenge to a Homophobic Media

Disparaging portrayals of gays and lesbians have been a vital concern because these depictions can help shape people's attitudes toward gay people. Gross (1984) reports that heavy television viewers have more negative attitudes towards gays. The influence may be especially pronounced for people who do not have direct interaction with self-avowed gays and receive all of their information about this group from news and entertainment media. These media images may also influence the self-image of gays and lesbians, providing a warped view of who gay people are. Kielwasser and Wolf (1992, p. 350) suggest that gay adolescents may be especially harmed by the lack of images of young gay characters in television or film, saying "The symbolic annihilation of gay and lesbian youth exhibited by...most mass media in general, can contribute to a dysfunctional isolation" for this group.

Portrayals of minority groups like gays are so influential in part because of the representational nature of media, particularly television and film. Gross (1994, p. 144) explains that such media are "nearly always represented as transparent mediators of reality that can and do show us how people and places look, how institutions operate; in short, the way it is." Yet rather than reflecting reality, mainstream media present a subjective interpretation of people and events that reflects the views of dominant elites in society that are "mostly white, mostly middle-aged, mostly male, mostly middle- and upper-middle class (at least in public) entirely heterosexual" (Gross, 1994, p. 143). The omission and condemnation of gays and lesbians in mainstream media has served to reinforce the dominance of these elites by keeping this group marginalized.

In this skewed portrayal of the world, gays have been either absent from the media or presented in derogatory, demeaning ways. Fejes and Petrich (1993, p. 398) point out that in theatrical films from the 1950s to 1970s, "homosexuality was portrayed at best as unhappiness, sickness, or marginality, and at worst perversion and an evil to be destroyed." This was paralleled by similar depictions on network television where gays were omitted or presented as evil, dangerous, pathetic, and mentally ill. The malicious portrayals of gays prompted growing organized protests by gay political organizations against mainstream entertainment and news media. Gays and lesbians increasingly demanded more representative portrayals in these media.

There were a series of conflicts between major media and gay activist groups that objected to defamatory portrayals of gays. In October 1969, gays organized a protest against the San Francisco Examiner for an article that described gays as "semi-males" and "drag-darlings" (Rutledge, 1992, p. 9). In 1974, the National Gay Task Force (NGTF, later renamed the National Lesbian and Gay Task Force) objected to an episode of Marcus Welby that portrayed a gay person as a child molester and suggested that homosexuality was a disease that could be cured. The NGTF sponsored a letter writing campaign opposing the show that led four advertisers to withdraw their sponsorship from the episode. ABC aired the episode, but added a voice over narration to the show explaining the difference between homosexuals and child molesters. In 1989, AIDS groups protested a planned episode of *Midnight Caller*, a network television series set in San Francisco that features a heterosexual talk show host. In the original script, the host's ex-lover, who is HIV positive, pursues and kills the bisexual man who infected her. Following protests by AIDS activists, the script was changed so that the bisexual man was saved by the radio host and sympathetic gay characters were added. Gay activists disrupted the filming of *Basic Instinct* in San Francisco in 1991 because of its offensive portrayal of women bisexuals as sadistic murderers.

Through these kinds of actions and protests, the portrayal of gays and lesbians in mainstream media improved somewhat with occasional theatrical films featuring sympathetic gay characters and network series infrequently including affirmative presentations of gay people. Fejes and Petrich (1993, p. 412) stress that the change did not occur because of well meaning or altruistic executives in television networks or film studios. "Rather, the activism of gays and lesbians in confronting and challenging negative stereotypy played a decisive role in the change."

Previous Research on Gay Media Activism

The efforts of gay activist groups to improve media portrayals of gays has been examined by Montgomery (1981, 1989) and Moritz (1989). Montgomery conducted interviews with gay activist groups and network television executives in 1978-79 to survey the strategies used by such groups and assess to what extent they were able to influence television program content. In the 1970s, the two main organizations that lobbied the television networks were the NGTF, based in New York City near the corporate headquarters of the three commercial networks, and the Gay Media Task Force (GMTF), which was established by the NGTF in 1973 in Los Angeles, the West Coast center of television production. Gay activists wanted to have a visible presence in both cities so that the networks could not shift responsibility to their headquarters on the other coast. The NGTF was affiliated with local gay organizations in many cities that could take part in national organized campaigns.

Gay activist groups monitored both the content of network shows for the portrayal of gays and the development of shows throughout the production process at the networks and production companies. Montgomery says that these groups used both cooperative and confrontational tactics to achieve their objective of more sympathetic portrayals of gay characters and issues in network shows. Gay activists would regularly meet with network executives in friendly, informal settings to discuss shows with gay-related content. However, activists would also infrequently use more confrontational tactics against the networks to change their programming, like letter writing campaigns, sit-ins and demonstrations. Between 1973 and 1978, Montgomery identifies seven major "zaps" of this nature that were designed to get the networks to alter their programming. While the networks did not agree to all of the activists' demands, they either modified the content of shows or their scheduled broadcast time in all of these actions. Montgomery (1981, p. 57) concludes that gay activists have been able to influence program content "in a substantial number of instances," but that their influence "has been tempered by the requisites that control the creation of all network entertainment material, resulting in a carefully structured picture of gay life designed to sufficiently entice but not offend a mass audience."

Moritz (1989) surveys the attempts of the Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Artists (AGLA) to increase the positive portrayals of gays on television in the mid to late 1980s. AGLA monitored local and network television shows for gay portrayals, finding only seven shows with homosexual characters in 1987 with just one featuring a lesbian. Moritz provides several reasons for the lack of lesbian characters in network television series up until the mid 1980s. She notes that in a male-oriented mass media that reflects a male point of view women are underrepresented and their experiences ignored. The lack of lesbian portrayals is simply an extreme example of this male orientation. The television industry is male dominated where most writers and producers are men. She says that while there are gays in media industries, women tend to be more "closeted" than men making it more difficult to promote affirmative lesbian characters in programming. The emergence of AIDS worked to the disadvantage of lesbians because networks tended to equate gay issues with AIDS and cover little else, ignoring lesbians completely. When lesbian characters were presented in television shows prior to 1985, they were often scheming killers as was the case on Police Woman and Hunter.

Moritz claims that there were structural changes in network television that encouraged more frequent portrayals of lesbians in programs in the late 1980s. Competition from cable television and home video led to declining network audience ratings, prompting the networks to search for more appealing programs to win back these viewers. Consequently, the networks became more adventurous in their programming, including shows with gay characters. The success of gay themes and characters in other media like film and cable also encouraged network support for such programs. The networks relaxed their censorship policies, cutting back their standards departments and providing production companies with more discretion. Producers were able to include gay characters and story ideas with less interference from network censors. As a result of these institutional forces, many network shows began dealing with gay themes, usually bringing in a gay or lesbian character for one episode. In spring 1988, ABC introduced a new series, Heartbeat, with a recurring lesbian character, although Moritz notes that this character was never allowed to express sexual or romantic feelings like the heterosexual characters on the show.

Gross notes that in the early 1990s, the Gay and Lesbian

Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) has become the major gay activist group working to promote more positive images of gay people in the mainstream media. Thus, he says "the stage is set for an updated study of the battlefield on which the current struggle over lesbian and gay images is fought" (Gross, 1994, p. 153). The remainder of this paper attempts to make a modest contribution to that updated study through an examination of the strategies and concerns of the San Francisco Bay Area (SFBA) chapter of GLAAD. GLAAD/SFBA cooperates with other GLAAD chapters, but is an autonomous organization.(1) I conducted two extensive interviews with the current and past executive directors of GLAAD/SFBA in January 1996, asking them to discuss the goals, objectives and strategies of their organization and to respond to criticisms of their work.

GLAAD/SFBA: The Executive Directors

Kristy Billuni, the current director of GLAAD/SFBA, had held the position for about 10 months when this interview was conducted. She has been a gay activist "for years", and before her involvement in GLAAD worked in a political campaign in Oregon to defeat that state's ballot measure nine that would have permitted discrimination against gays and lesbians.(2) She became involved with GLAAD because she wanted to "work in the queer movement, and I was looking to do nonprofit work because that was an area that I hadn't really explored and I had been doing campaign work for quite a while." Tom di Maria, was hired as GLAAD/SFBA's interim executive director in July 1993 as its first professional, salaried officer and was later hired permanently. He was in this position until early 1995, and is currently the acting executive director of the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission, which he describes as a "U.S. based international organization that...educates and works for equal rights for sexual minorities throughout the world." Prior to his involvement in GLAAD, di Maria was the executive director of Frameline which organizes a popular gay film festival in San Francisco and distributes gay and lesbian films on home video. He sees his move from Frameline to GLAAD as a natural progression: "I was interested in communication and media as a form of changing people's minds and putting out information about a community so the switch from media arts to media activism really wasn't that great."

Acting as executive director for GLAAD/SFBA apparently involves doing everything. "Basically I'm the only full-time staff," says Billuni, "so I do a lot of the coordinating and all of the work that the volunteers are doing -- all of the activism, taking care of the finances, taking care of all the non-so-fun nonprofit work, the management stuff. But I'm volunteer coordinator, I'm recruiter, I'm the chief fund-raiser and the list goes on and on." Di Maria agrees that as a "one-person staff" he had to do "everything" including administration, fund-raising, media relations and establish press policies.

GLAAD/SFBA's Strategies for Media Activism

Billuni describes the mission of GLAAD/SFBA as working to "fight for fair, accurate, and diverse portrayals of our community -- gay, lesbian, the sexual transgender people -- in all forms of media. So we're looking to see ourselves represented the way we really are in real life." To accomplish this goal, GLAAD/SFBA regularly contacts local and national media to discuss how these outlets are presenting gay issues and characters. GLAAD tries to encourage greater attention to gays in media content, while discouraging the presentation of derogatory gay stereotypes and homophobic rhetoric against gay people. To accomplish these goals, GLAAD uses both cooperative and confrontational tactics. The decisions about what approach is used depend to a large extent upon the past relationship between GLAAD and the media outlet. For "more friendly outlets who are interested in being educated," Billuni says it does "education with the media directly, working with reporters, working with publicists, working with presidents of corporations to help them to understand how they can better represent us in whatever media outlet they represent." Di Maria preferred an "inside strategy of actually meeting with somebody sympathetic [at the media outlet] or actually getting to a general manager or somebody who really is willing to hear you out."

For more hostile media, the strategies are more confrontational. "When and if we run into something that is clearly defamatory and clearly a media outlet that is not interested in our opinion, we take different tactics, like letter writing campaigns....Very definitely our strongest and most effective tactic for working to stop defamations is bringing our members in to write letters and to contact them by mail, by e-mail, by fax, and by slow mail as well." In such campaigns, di Maria says that GLAAD would occasionally call for an advertising boycott of companies sponsoring a program that had offensive content. However, he personally did not approve of such a boycott unless GLAAD had tried an "inside strategy" of meeting with media executives to give them "a reasonable chance to respond to your concerns."

The type of campaign varies according to the size of the company being targeted. Billuni says that smaller companies tend to read each piece of mail, so for these GLAAD will encourage its volunteers to write personalized letters. Larger companies are generally only interested in the quantity of writers. For these firms, "we know that some CEO somewhere is just going to get a number, 200 people said this and 300 people said that." In such instances GLAAD may decide "let's produce massive numbers of postcards that say the same thing."

GLAAD's activism is facilitated by the organization's various publications. GLAAD/SFBA regularly distributes information to the gay community about recent examples of desirable and offensive portrayals of gay people and coverage of gay related topics. A representative from GLAAD writes a regular weekly column published in the Bay Area Reporter, a local gay newspaper in San Francisco and gay papers in many other cities. The column describes several instances of recent gay portrayals (or omission of gays), provides information about how to contact the producer of this media content, and strongly encourages readers to write, telephone or E-mail the producer to express their approval or criticism of the content. The column also provides information about advertisers of programs and suggests that these sponsors be contacted as well. GLAAD/SFBA publishes their own monthly newsletter that is sent to members, volunteers and friends that also provides this kind of information along with more detailed information about GLAAD's activities, meetings and events. It also produces many one page flyers that draw attention to a single particularly egregious "defamatory" portrayal or urge attendance at a planned event.

GLAAD/SFBA increasingly uses new communication technologies to conduct its media activism. The organization has two Web sites on the Internet and communicates with its volunteers through electronic mail. A major use of the Internet is to send timely information about media content to local gay and lesbian publications that is passed along to their readers. Billuni says that a "media alert gets literally launched on a weekly basis to just about every gay publication in the country and some outside of the country as well. It really does have an international scope." Many local gay papers reprint GLAAD's "Media alert" column that provides a way for people in areas without an organized gay community to become involved in media activism.

The column urges readers to write to the firms responsible for desirable and derogatory portrayals of gays. GLAAD/SFBA has conducted a campaign to get the television series Star Trek: Voyager to have gay characters almost entirely on the Internet by getting people to sign a petition "on-line" that is sent to the Voyager producers. While Billuni is encouraged about their successful use of the Internet, she has reservations about relying too heavily on this type of high-tech activism because many lack access to this media form. She wants to promote an inclusive diversity of voices at GLAAD, yet notes the typical user of the Internet "is a 30 to 40 year old white man making $60,000 a year."

How GLAAD/SFBA Decides What Is Defamatory

Billuni explained how GLAAD/SFBA decides whether an instance of media content is "defamatory" and if the organization should take some action against the media outlet that presented that offensive material. GLAAD relies on its volunteers to monitor local and national media for derogatory and affirmative portrayals of gays, and has a "hotline" for people to call to report these instances. Billuni estimates that GLAAD/SFBA receives between 5 to 10 calls a day on the hotline. Volunteers will then investigate the claims made in these calls and contact the media outlet that was responsible for the offensive content. She says that GLAAD will try to determine "whether it's a case of someone who just needs education and very possibly didn't mean any harm at all...and is open and ready to learn from us as opposed to a media outlet that is clearly defaming us and interested in defaming us." Di Maria defined "defamation" as including "inaccurate information," "personal attacks on people--really hurtful kinds of content that went beyond making fun of someone," and "inciteful kinds of language or actions."

Both Billuni and di Maria stressed that there is a robust debate within GLAAD/SFBA and the local gay community in general over what constitutes "defamation." "The volunteers, the board and myself and the other staff person," says Billuni, "argue about whether something is defamatory or affirming to our community, and it's constantly being redefined." GLAAD tries to attract a wider diversity of volunteers so that there can be a more diverse range of voices in this "healthy" debate about what is offensive or commendable about media portrayals of gays. Di Maria acknowledges that GLAAD was sometimes unable to arrive at a consensus about what constituted "defamatory" portrayals. For instance, there were divergent opinions on whether the title of a column in the San Francisco Weekly paper titled "Hey Faggot" was offensive to gays. Some believed the term "faggot" was a demeaning insult, while others believed that the columnist was trying to re-appropriate the term for gay people as an affirmative appellation. In such instances, GLAAD would simply present information about the media content in its newsletters or news stories and let gay people decide for themselves. GLAAD would suggest that individual readers write to media outlets to let them know how they felt about specific portrayals whether they liked it or were offended by it. This strategy was adopted with the "Men on Film" skit featuring two effeminate film reviewers on the show In Living Color because di Maria said the skit was "both funny to some people and offensive to others."

Campaigns Against KGO and KSFO

GLAAD/SFBA's campaigns against two radio stations, KGO and KSFO, illustrates its strategies for combating "defamatory" portrayals of gay people. Both stations began airing talk shows featuring arch conservatives that constantly attacked gays, people with AIDS and other minority groups. Di Maria reviewed the tactics used by GLAAD to stop these attacks aired on what he calls "hate radio":

> One, try to educate the station about why it was offensive to the community. Two, deal with any inaccuracies, which were generally numerous, about the information that was being put out by the station that wasn't true. And three, generate constituency pressure, having people who listen call and say, 'I don't like to listen to that,' and let the station know that audience members find it offensive. And four, our more effective strategy, and our last resort, is to communicate that same information to advertisers and ask them that if they agree with our point of view, not to support the station with their dollars. And we've had pretty good results, more with one station than the other.

On KGO, the announcers on the morning program included frequent derogatory remarks about gays and people with AIDS. There were "bad jokes and a lot of information about how you can catch AIDS from a cough and things like that that were just blatantly untrue," explains di Maria. He pointed out that the information presented about AIDS in particular was incorrect and potentially harmful to the listening audience. In this instance, GLAAD/SFBA cooperated with the AIDS activist group, ACT Up Golden Gate, to present KGO with factual information about HIV transmission and other matters. The station provided some retractions for incorrect information and offered GLAAD response time for people to provide more accurate information about HIV and AIDS. However, KGO refused to provide this in a prime time slot comparable to the time of the show when the original defamatory information was aired. Despite KGO's concessions, di Maria became frustrated with a recurring cycle where KGO's behavior would improve for a while after complaints from GLAAD, only to later slide back into defamatory attacks prompting further complaints. GLAAD ultimately changed the focus of their campaign away from the station management to its sponsors. "When it got to the point where we just didn't want to play that game anymore, and they were being continually offensive, we started to deal with their advertisers and then were successful in having their format changed."

Another major target of GLAAD/SFBA's activities has been KSFO, a radio station with an all conservative talk radio format that Billuni describes as a "hate radio station". She says that "a lot of hatred and bigotry is being thrown out over the airwaves from KSFO today, probably at this very moment," and remains astonished that such a station could thrive in San Francisco with its liberal background. As with KGO, GLAAD/SFBA objected to KSFO spreading misinformation about AIDS and gay people that is "causing hurt and pain for people." GLAAD has used a number of tactics against KSFO, including picketing outside their offices and using GLAAD's "phone tree" to encourage volunteers to call KSFO voicing their criticisms. Billuni says that KSFO's phone lines have been overwhelmed with callers from GLAAD. A GLAAD board member, Bob Schultz, regularly monitors KSFO's programs for instances of defamatory content.

As KSFO demonstrated its insensitivity to GLAAD's concerns, GLAAD shifted the focus of its campaign to targeting KSFO's advertisers. GLAAD encourages companies to pull their advertising from KSFO by informing them about the inflammatory rhetoric aired on the station. GLAAD will either send sponsors an audio tape of offensive segments from KSFO or call them on the phone describing this content. Billuni finds that most companies are unaware of the actual content of these shows, but instead have only been told that the radio station caters to a particular demographic group that they are trying to reach. She says that most companies they contact are genuinely appalled by the content of KSFO's shows once made aware of it and many have pulled their ads from the radio station in response. As a result, "KSFO has been losing advertisers for over the past year pretty consistently because of the work we're doing." For those companies who do not stop advertising, there is the implied threat of a boycott: "We keep our members informed on who isn't pulling their money, and we make sure that they know that you know that these are the companies that are knowingly, willingly, and deviously supporting hate talk in your city."

GLAAD/SFBA: Censor or Advocate of Free Speech?

Media activist groups like GLAAD are regularly accused by media organizations of trying to stifle their free speech rights by acting as a censor. These critics claim that people should be able to express their views no matter how objectionable or hateful those views are. GLAAD supposedly attempts to curb robust freedom of speech by preventing an airing of views it deems offensive. Both Billuni and di Maria reject this claim that GLAAD attempts to censor speech. Quite the contrary, both claim that GLAAD's mission is to expand free speech and broaden the range of views and information presented about gays and lesbians in the media. Di Maria explains:

> ...an organization like GLAAD doesn't try to censor anyone's freedom of expression but uses its own freedom of expression to present its point of view on the same subject. So if you have a film with content that's offensive to the lesbian and gay community, no one from GLAAD is going into the projector booth and actually trying to snip that scene out of the film, but what the organization is doing is trying to respond by utilizing its own First Amendment rights to the largest audience possible to say, 'This is offensive and we don't want you to see it.' We want to let you know why this is offensive, why this is inaccurate, why this doesn't represent our community.

Billuni finds it "oxymoronic" that GLAAD is accused of being a censor when it simply wants "more information" and "our stories to be told in the media." GLAAD seeks to "talk back to the media and say 'what you're saying is a lie about us,', to react to it, to put out positive information, to put out affirming images as another way of combating these lies that are out there and again, to educate the media so that they are representing us fairly, accurately, and in all of our diversity." She says that GLAAD is clearly not trying to "cover up our dirty secrets about our community," like the incidence of unsafe sex. Instead, it wants "to uncover more information, and to demand that when information is put out there, it is accurate and it's true."

Billuni defends GLAAD's actions against KSFO by drawing a distinction between practicing free speech and presenting false information: "Spreading misinformation about how a person gets AIDS is not about freedom of speech, it's about putting people in danger, period. It's about leading people to believe something that could lead to some serious health problems." She says GLAAD's activities attempt to draw attention to this incorrect information, not censor it: "We may not have the right to say, 'You have to shut up,' but we certainly have the right to say, 'What you're saying is wrong. It's a lie about our community." GLAAD further exercises its own free speech rights when it informs advertisers about the programming on a radio station like KSFO. "We want to make sure that companies that are handing over dollars to these people know...what their money is supporting, and...what it is that is being said on KSFO."

Diversity Within GLAAD/SFBA

Gay organizations including GLAAD have sometimes been criticized for being overly dominated by the white male portion of the gay community, with women and people of color underrepresented. Di Maria and Billuni are more ambivalent about this charge. GLAAD's board of directors and di Maria himself had specific concerns about this issue at the time he was being considered for the job of executive director. As a white male, he would be the only paid staff member for the organization, which raised questions: "Will it be male-driven? And will it be inclusive of people of color?" To partially address this issue, di Maria advocated the development of coalitions including GLAAD and other organizations that served specific constituencies so that GLAAD could be more responsive to the diverse interests of an eclectic gay community. Di Maria says that the demographic background of people in GLAAD was quite diverse: "I think that the organization in the time I was there maintained a diverse board, both in terms of representations of people of color and men and women. A volunteer pool was diverse [as was the] subsequent staff that I hired."

Billuni was less optimistic about the composition of volunteers:

> I am not happy with where it is right now, to be quite honest. Our monitoring team unfortunately consists of mostly white men. We have...two transgender activists who are involved with GLAAD and that is not enough. We have a pretty large number of bisexual...volunteers and activists, board members as well. But I think we are in desperate need of widening our range.

Billuni believes that it is important to have a diverse group of people involved in GLAAD so that the organization can more successfully fulfill its mission of promoting more diverse representations of gay people. People from various backgrounds that are underrepresented in the media -- such as Latina lesbians, bisexuals or disabled gays -- are more likely to bring this to the attention of GLAAD. Conversely, a disproportionate emphasis on gay white men might skew the focus of GLAAD toward the media portrayals of that particular segment of the community. Billuni explains:

> We have a monitoring team that consists of 10 white men....Monitor(s)...come in every two weeks and they bring what they have found in their lives -- what they have seen on TV and what they've read in the paper, and they bring what catches their eye. Well, everyone's eye is drawn to things that are part of their worldview, and so, everyone has a narrow worldview.

If all the monitors are white men, this committee then may be too narrowly focused on the "worldview" of this group. Rather, Billuni suggests that GLAAD needs to diversify with "more people working so that we have a combination of lots of narrow worldviews to bring together."

GLAAD/SFBA's Relationship with Gay "Insiders"

Signorile (1993) and others claim that many gay people are employed in media industries, a large portion of whom are closeted. Billuni argues that these gay "insiders" have been helpful in GLAAD's efforts to achieve better representations of gay people. "It's amazing how many moles we have, and I sort of have to stop there," declining to reveal who these were. She adds that GLAAD has many allies in media organizations "who may not be queer, but they're queer-friendly." Di Maria is more ambivalent about the role of gays in media industries. He says that "there are closeted gay people that work in the industry that will give you information and be helpful. You have to question if they really wanted to be helpful shouldn't they come out?" He describes some gays in media industries as "obstacles sometimes because they don't want to be the point person associated with all the gay issues that come their way." These gay insiders also often do not promote gay-oriented projects because "they don't want to be seen as one-dimensional or single-issue." Di Maria also suggests that in journalism, gay reporters may tend to be more scrupulous in presenting anti-gay viewpoints in the name of "balance" in gay-themed stories to avoid being criticized for an alleged pro-gay bias. Di Maria criticizes articles written by David Dunlop, a reporter for the New York Times who he identifies as gay, for having this exaggerated sense of balance.

The question of "outing" closeted gays in media industries has been a recurring controversy within the gay community and has been considered by GLAAD's directors. Billuni says that GLAAD does not oppose "outing", suggesting that there is nothing shameful or wrong in being identified as a gay person. "How could it possibly be defamatory to call someone gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender?...It's an affirmative thing to point our finger and say, "You're part of our family." Di Maria said that GLAAD did not engage in any outing while he was director and does not believe GLAAD had an official policy on the matter at that time. However, GLAAD would "deal the same way with a gay person as a non gay person in terms of whatever strategies were most effective."

Is GLAAD Still Needed Today?

Some media critics have called attention to the increasing number of portrayals of gays and lesbians in mainstream and alternative media in the past years, raising the issue of whether GLAAD has accomplished its goals and is no longer needed. While Billuni and di Maria acknowledge that there are more portrayals of gay people today, they both claim that there are still problems that GLAAD needs to address. Billuni explains that the abundance of gay characters on prime time television in particular has altered the mission of GLAAD from protesting the omission of gays in media to making sure that the portrayals that are presented are fair, accurate representations:

> We want to see the lesbian characters pop up on Friends and so, that's wonderful, and we're really excited to see them there. So now, when you go watch it make sure that those lesbian characters are a fair representation of...our community. So, it certainly changes the tactics. It doesn't really affect the mission. The mission marches on.

di Maria points out that while there are more gays and lesbian characters on television, these characters are "completely sexless. The lesbian and gay characters never kiss, never have sex. So, there's still a lot of things to advocate for." Di Maria also says that even though the quantity of portrayals has grown, there is still not a "multiplicity of images" of gays and lesbians. That is, the portrayals of gay people in television and film do not reflect the diversity of gay people in society. Instead, there remain pernicious stereotypes about gays and lesbians in the mainstream media that largely constitute how gays are portrayed. For instance, it is a problem, if "you have a lesbian psycho-killer and that's the only lesbian character that's been on the screen for ten years." So that an organization like GLAAD is needed until "the proportions start to reflect the population and the diversity of the characters is both good and bad and crazy and silly and smart and sexual and nonsexual."

He cautions that organizations like GLAAD need to focus on promoting this diversity of portrayals rather than identifying what constitutes an "acceptable" portrayal. Diverse portrayals celebrate the "queerness of our community," while "if everyone has to agree that this person is acceptable, the person's not going to be very interesting and that's not what being gay means to me."

Conclusion

Organizations like GLAAD/SFBA continue the work of gay media activism today carried out by NGTF and AGLA in the 1970s and 1980s reviewed by Montgomery and Moritz. In order to achieve better representations of gay people, GLAAD relies on both the cooperative and confrontational strategies used by NGTF and GMTF identified by Montgomery. GLAAD attempts to develop a cordial dialog with media executives, but does not hesitate to take more adversarial action like letter-writing campaigns and advertiser boycotts if it considers media outlets unresponsive or hostile. GLAAD/SFBA has incorporated new information technologies into its media activism in the 1990s, making increasing use of the Internet.

It clearly has influenced mainstream media outlets' attention to gays, but within certain defined limits imposed by economic constraints. Network television shows feature more gay characters, but as di Maria complains these portrayals lack any expression of sexuality, continuing a pattern described by Montgomery and Moritz in the 1970s and 1980s. Both authors suggest that such asexual depictions are mandated by television networks' desire to attract a mass audience while not offending any sizeable portion of that audience. Conversely, the economic drive to reach a specific demographic audience of political conservatives leads radio stations like KSFO to continue "hate radio" formats despite actions by GLAAD.

Mainstream media outlets continue to provide coverage of AIDS, a trend discussed by Moritz. The primary concern of GLAAD is not attention to the subject, but rather that media outlets present accurate, factual information about the topic. Portrayals of gays and lesbians in media outlets have continued to increase, another trend identified by Moritz that accelerated in the late 1980s. The more frequent images of gays has led GLAAD/SFBA to shift its focus somewhat away from complaints about the omission of gays and toward a call for these portrayals to be more representative and diverse. GLAAD/SFBA strenuously rejects criticism that it seeks to curb free speech, instead claiming that the organization simply is exercising its own free speech rights in order to broaden the range of gay representations in various media. Despite various obstacles, Billuni and di Maria suggest that GLAAD/SFBA continues to make admirable progress toward this goal.

Notes

1. In this paper, the term "GLAAD" is used to refer to the San Francisco Bay Area chapter of the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation unless otherwise noted.

2. All direct quotes from this point until the end of the paper are from Kristy Billuni or Tom di Maria. These quotes are taken from separate interviews conducted in January 1996. If there is no name attributed to a particular sentence or clause, that section continues a series of direct quotes from the person most immediately identified in the previous sentences.

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Do vivid and pallid news portrayals of political expression influence political tolerance?

by

Catherine A. Steele, Ph.D., Michael E. Cremedas, Ph.D., and
A. Randall Wenner, B.S.

S. I. Newhouse School of Public Communications
Syracuse University
215 University Place
Syracuse, NY 13244-2100

Contact: casteele@mailbox.syr.edu
(315) 443-4118

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Do vivid and pallid news portrayals of political expression influence tolerance?

ABSTRACT. This experiment investigates whether vivid television news portrayals influence viewers' reactions to two groups — homosexuals and a strongly anti-gay group of white supremacists. Results suggest that viewers of pallid information may be more emotional and more inclined to agree with repressive measures against the group depicted. Without television's influence, subjects may engage in more principled reasoning; they may be more tolerant and less willing to agree with repressive actions.

Do vivid and pallid news portrayals of political expression influence political tolerance?

Numerous observers, including anti-gay violence survivor Claudia Brenner in Eight Bullets, have commented on journalism's impudent tendencies toward sensationalism when treating stories about gay men and lesbians. Almost any story topic, it seems, from what should be sober accounts of anti-gay violence to the festivities of gay and lesbian pride marches, is prone to dramatic and stereotypic treatment by the media.

Gay men and lesbians are not the only convenient victims of this system of journalists' judgments which emphasize, especially for television journalism, the dramatic and most vivid narrative. Such representations of minority groups will necessarily "reflect the biases and interest of those elites who define the public agenda" (Gross, 1991). Drawing in viewers to stories rich in visuals, action, emotion, and conflict certainly represents the biases of television news. But, just what effect do these news portrayals of groups have on audience's willingness to tolerate others, including gays and lesbians?

The present study investigates the possibility that vivid television news portrayals may influence viewers' reactions to social and political groups by affecting their willingness to support the civil liberties of others, a concept known as political tolerance. To understand better the mechanisms of influence, this study examines the portrayals of two groups — gay men and lesbians (homosexuals) who exercised their free speech in a parade in Syracuse, New York — and, a strongly anti-gay group of white supremacists (who attempted to march in Auburn, New York but who were overwhelmed by counter-demonstrators).

Before describing our methodology and results, we review our conceptualization of vivid portrayals and contrast it with its more pallid version. Next, we describe what scholars have meant by political tolerance, and we specify, for this study, our theoretical interests in viewers' reactions.

We then describe previous research that has examined the relationship between media usage and tolerance. Our results contribute to an established body of research on political tolerance.

Conceptualizing Vivid News Portrayals.

Vivid information is emotionally interesting, concrete and image provoking, and proximate in a sensory or spatial way (Nesbitt & Ross, 1980), such that it increases viewers' cognitive elaboration Taylor & Thompson, 1982). Vividness may be thought of as having two dimensions: subject and form. News producers prefer the most vivid subjects portrayed in the most dramatic format possible.

For this study, a vivid television news portrayal on political tolerance presents the dramatic element of conflict through statements made by individuals who intends to march or rally. A vivid presentation of the gay and lesbian group includes a minister's impassioned speech against homosexual rights and the "evils of homosexual conduct." This vivid portrayal highlights a conflict of ideals between organized religion and homosexuals. A vivid portrayal of white supremacists includes three compelling images: (1) the counter-demonstrators' vehement objections to the white supremacists' presence in Auburn during crowd scenes, (2) the testimony of a Nazi death camp survivor, and (3) several seconds of a confrontation between demonstrators. This vivid portrayal of the white supremacist's group emphasized the group's ideals through dramatic scenes of the community's resistance to them.

By comparison, a pallid television news portrayal of the same event presents the descriptive facts without the vivid scene. It is essentially neutral or bland when compared to vivid material, as it is without the emotionally compelling subject matter. For the white supremacists, a pallid portrayal eliminated the testimony of Marv Templeman, nazi death camp survivor, and the scenes of group confrontation. For the gay and lesbian march, the pallid portrayal excluded the minister's speech. Detailed script information on the experimental stimuli are presented in Appendix A.

Scholars have been concerned with a possible information bias due to vivid portrayals, such that viewers will be drawn in and persuaded by such content. While some studies have disputed the effects of vivid information on persuasion (Frey & Eagly, 1993; Collins, Taylor, Wood & Thompson, 1988), other studies have found conditions under which vividness may influence viewers. Overall, the evidence for vividness effects is mixed, suggesting the need for further research.

Political Tolerance.

Choosing to examine news portrayals of particular groups — homosexuals and white supremacists — complies with theoretical precedent. The tolerance literature has emphasized particular social groups that have been labelled as nonconformists, partly due to prevailing social conditions and to a researcher's operational definition of tolerance. Stouffer's (1955) seminal study focused on communists and atheists as nonconformists. More recently, the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) at the University of Chicago has continued to track trends in tolerance by measuring the public's opinions toward groups of communists, militarists, homosexuals, racists, and atheists (Nunn et al., 1978).

To say one tolerates another, is to assert social power. By their choice of research methods and question wording, public opinion researchers studying tolerance have clearly asserted a uniform majority stance against a minority group—in this case, gay men and lesbians. Despite the presumption of intergroup conflict, minority groups may find useful information about the etiology of intolerance towards groups like themselves.

Determining which criteria individuals use to make a tolerant decision begins with the conceptual definition of tolerance: Individuals' support for the civil liberties of others. However, researchers have been more contentious about operational definitions of tolerance. One group of researchers asserts a *negative affect* model such that an individual must support the civil liberties of a

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least-liked other (Sullivan, Piereson, & Marcus, 1982). Some researchers specify an *agreement model* in which respondents must agree with the tolerant side, decided a priori (Stouffer, 1955; Sniderman, Tetlock, Glaser, Green, & Hout, 1989). Still others see weaknesses in models driven purely by emotion (the Sullivan model) or by an assumed nonconformist (the Stouffer model). These researchers specify a *principled reasoning model* that allows the subject or respondent to elicit principles such as the First Amendment to the constitution (McLeod, Steele, Chi, & Huang, 1991) in an open-ended question. We have adopted the principled reasoning approach for this study.

Conceptual difficulties raise other measurement concerns. Researchers' concerns for subjects' feelings, at a minimum, suggests the implementation of controls or measuring changes in feelings. Other researchers have questioned whether tolerance and intolerance are unidimensional, suggesting separate concepts altogether. Accordingly, we include measures of individuals' willingness to support repressive state actions (Gibson, 1986) as an alternative measure of intolerance.

To summarize, our study examines the influence of vivid and pallid news portrayals on each component of tolerance. We examine possible influences on subjects' cognition (principles) and affect in their reasoning processes, their decisions to tolerate others or not, their feelings toward group members, and their willingness to support political repressive measures. By investigating possible effects on affect and cognition, we assume the presence of associative connections among subjects' feelings and cognition (Berkowitz & Rogers, 1986; p. 60).

Media Influences on Political Tolerance.

Research regarding the influence of television news on subjects' tolerance has been limited. Almost all research incorporating media as possible influences, have used global measures that are of dubious relevance to a study of exact news portrayals. Studies have found a positive relationship between an individual's attention to specific media content like reading books and magazines (Wilson,

1975) and his or her tolerance for others. Generally, there is some evidence to sustain the idea that individuals' attention to newspaper and television public affairs programming facilitates tolerance (McLeod et al., 1991). These studies suggest the possibility of a positive relationship between individuals' attention to specific media content and tolerance.

Other studies have observed a negative relationship between viewing entertainment programming and tolerance. Archie Bunker was a lovable bigot in CBS television's *All in the Family*, but research found that, contrary to producer Norman Lear's intentions, some viewers may have perceived the show as "telling it like it is" (Vidmar & Rokeach, 1974). Audience members misconstrued the satiric messages of the lampooned Mr. Bigott character portrayed in cartoons, whom researchers described as a "ridiculous prudish figure, with exaggerated anti-minority feelings" (Cooper & Jahoda, 1977, p. 289). Among preadults, watching crime shows has been found to be related to less support for others' civil liberties (Carlson, 1983).

Studies concerning the negative influences of entertainment programming on person's tolerance tend to derive theoretically from Gerbner's cultivation thesis. Cultivation research asserts that heavy doses of television entertainment programming may lead to an individual's perception of social reality consonant with what appears on television. Studies find that a heavy viewer is likely to perceive him or herself as a political "moderate" and a heavy viewer is likely to support political repression (Gerbner et al., 1984; Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorielli, 1982; Morgan & Shanahan, 1991; see also, McLeod et al., 1991). These findings suggest the need to examine the relationship between individuals' television news attention and their support for political repression.

Whether the study has found a positive or negative media influence on tolerance, almost all studies tend to be supported by correlational data. Previous researchers may have preferred survey methodology to examine the correlates between media usage and tolerance because of the latter concept's roots in the public opinion tradition. A drawback to using survey research is its implicit focus on self-exposure to media with which respondents may have a predisposition to agree (Hovland, 1959/1973).. Clearly, to the extent that survey research has been the primary means of data collection, this literature remains methodologically impoverished.[1]

Summary.

Do vivid and pallid news portrayals of news events influence subjects' tolerance of others? This study reports the results of an experiment designed to investigate the relationship between individuals' attention to television portrayals of two social groups — white supremacists and homosexuals — as separate examples of a group exercising its First Amendment rights to protest, rally, or march and their tolerance of these groups. In doing so, this study expands the literature on political tolerance by examining contemporary concerns about the influence of television news.

Hypotheses.

H1, H2: Subjects who watch the vivid portrayals will be less tolerant of the group exercising free expression (gays and lesbians; white supremacists) when compared separately to subjects in the other conditions.

H3, H4: Vivid presentations will elicit less principles in subjects' reasoning about the group exercising free expression (gays and lesbians; white supremacists) when compared separately to other conditions.

H5, H6: Vivid presentations will elicit more emotion in subjects' reasoning about the group exercising free expression (gays and lesbians; white supremacists) when compared separately to other conditions.

H7, H8: Vivid presentations will elicit greater change in subjects' feelings or affect toward the group exercising free expression (gays and lesbians; white supremacists) when compared separately to other conditions.

H9, H10: Vivid presentations will elicit more agreement with repressive measures against the group exercising free expression (gays and lesbians; white supremacists) than when compared separately to the other conditions.

METHOD

Subjects. The experiment took place in a medium size private university located in the northeast. Two-hundred thirty three undergraduates who were enrolled in either an introductory mass communications class or in an introductory electronic media class participated in the experiment during November of 1994 as a part of their course requirements.

Three classes were assigned to experimental conditions defined by vivid or pallid portrayal of subject matter or by control group status. Although students were not randomly assigned to conditions, pre-test measures indicated the almost perfect comparability of groups on variables likely to be related to the dependent measures (see Singleton, Straits, Straits & McAllister, 1988; Campbell & Stanley, 1963). The pre-test measures included ten items asking for a group's political spectrum rating, ten items asking for a group's similarity to most people, and ten items addressing the closeness to the ideas and action of some groups. Each group of ten items was summed to create an index. Cronbach's alpha for these indices range from .65 to .54. Table 1 shows the results of independent sample t-tests for the summated scales of these items. No significant differences between the three groups on the three pre-test measures were found 78% of the time.

Materials. Raw footage of the 1993 and 1994 events (the Auburn rally took place during the autumn of 1993; the gay and lesbian march occurred in the spring of 1994), was obtained from a local television station. Raw footage was reviewed and edited into two versions of a 90-second report: one vivid, the other pallid. Reports were then embedded into a ten-minute news production. The news brief was comprised of four stories; other stories reported on a court ruling and an economic report. The order in which the messages were heard was alternated across subjects: The first group heard the vivid white supremacists story first, then the pallid gay and lesbian story. The second group heard the pallid white supremacist story first, then the vivid gay and lesbian story. Subjects in the control group watched a newscast which did not include either the vivid or pallid versions of either group. The full text of both vivid and pallid presentations is included in Appendix A.

After filling out the pre-test measures, subjects viewed the videotape news brief. Then, participants completed a questionnaire that covered subjects' recall of the reports, subjects' decisions to tolerate the groups, open-ended reasoning, feelings toward the groups, political repression measures, and other questions covering a range of demographic and political orientations and affiliations.

Procedure. Questionnaires were distributed to the entire class already in progress. After a short introduction to the experiment, subjects were asked to fill out the pre-test portion of the questionnaire. When the subjects reached a nearly blank page demanding them to stop, the videotape was then played. Afterwards, subjects were asked to finish completing the questionnaire. Upon debriefing, students were told that the purpose of the experiment was to contrast the effects of different versions of the newscast they had seen.

Planned contrasts using multiple t tests were used to determine statistical significance because all hypotheses assumed orthogonal contrasts (Kirk, 1982, pp. 96-97). For all contrasts, the critical value was set at 1.645, $p < .05$. Only significant contrasts are reported and discussed.

Table 1 about here

Dependent Measures. All three versions of the questionnaires consisted of questions addressing subjects' decision to tolerate the groups. Subjects were asked, "Do you support the right of gay men and lesbians to hold a rally?" and "Please explain why you answered as you did."[2] Responses to the first question were coded on a three-point scale such that a tolerant response would be the highest score.[3] Responses to the open-ended question were coded for giving responses that were based on principled reasoning or on emotions. Scott's pi ranged from .87 to .97 for a random sample of open-ended items.[4]

Subjects were then asked to complete five items which addressed their agreement with politically repressive measures against homosexuals and white supremacists. Responses were coded on a ten-point scale ranging from (1) Do not favor at all to (10) Strongly Favor. Items were summed to create two indices (Cronbach's alpha = .87 and .85, respectively). Last, subjects' responses to a question asking how close he or she felt to members of the two groups were used to indicate change in affect. The difference score between pretest and posttest measures represents individuals' change in affect toward the group due to attention to the videotape news brief.

Table 2 about here

RESULTS

Tolerance Decision.

Results were mixed for the determination of whether vivid portrayals had a negative influence on subjects' tolerance decisions. Toward gay men and lesbians, subjects in the vivid portrayal condition were less tolerant than subjects in pallid condition ($t=1.88$, $p<.05$), and no difference was found between vivid and control conditions. For white supremacists, subjects in the pallid portrayal condition (Group 2) were less tolerant than subjects in the control condition (Group 3) ($t=-2.40$, $p<.05$). Contrary to expectations, subjects in the vivid condition were more tolerant than subjects in the pallid condition ($t=1.92$, $p<.05$). To summarize, evidence was mixed for the direction of influence, but vivid and pallid presentations influenced subjects' decisions to tolerate the group.

Principled reasoning.

Television news portrayals influenced subjects' reasoning criteria. For reports on gay men and lesbians, subjects in the control group (Group 3) engaged in more principled reasoning than did subjects in the vivid presentation condition (Group 2) ($t=-2.73$, p,.05). For white supremacists, subjects in the vivid condition tended to engage in more principled reasoning than did subjects in the pallid condition (t=2.15, $p<.05$). These data suggest that, except for cases of direct confrontation, vivid presentations tend to repress principled reasoning.

Table 3 about here

Use of emotions in reasoning.

Clear evidence obtained for the effect of television portrayals on subjects' uses of emotions in their reasoning. For the homosexual group, vivid portrayals (Group 2) elicit more emotions in person's reasoning than did pallid reports (Group 1) (t=2.86, $p<.05$). Further, subjects in the control condition (Group 3) used emotion more often than did subjects in the pallid condition (Group 1) (t=2.59, $p<.05$). For the white supremacists, a pallid presentation (Group 2) elicited more emotions in person's reasoning than did the vivid portrayal (Group 1) (t=2.99, $p<.05$). Subjects in the control condition (Group 3) used emotions more frequently in their reasoning than did subjects in the vivid condition (Group 1) (t=1.95, $p<.05$). Thus, where vivid presentations tended to repress subjects' emotions in reasoning about tolerating white supremacists, pallid portrayals tended to repress subjects' emotions about gays and lesbians.

Change in Affect (Posttest - Pretest).

On change in affect toward gay men and lesbians, the pallid portrayal (Group 1) elicited more change in feelings than did the vivid portrayal (Group 2) (t=-1.83, $p<.05$). This result implies that pallid portrayals produce more negative feelings for group members. Likewise, for white supremacists, a pallid portrayal (Group 2) aroused more change in subjects' affect than did the control condition (group 3) (t=-1.75, $p<.05$). Contrary to expectations, pallid presentations tended to elicit greater changes in feelings toward the depicted group, and these changes tend to be in the negative direction.

Willingness to Agree with Repressive Measures.

Contrasting results obtained on subjects' willingness to agree with repressive measures. Subjects in the vivid condition were more willing to repress homosexuals than were subjects who were shown the pallid version ($t=1.99$, $p<.05$). Moreover, subjects who were shown the vivid portrayal were more willing to agree with repressive measures against gays and lesbians than were subjects in the control condition ($t=1.84$, $p<.05$). For white supremacists, subjects in the pallid condition were more willing to agree to repressive actions against the white supremacists than subjects in the control group ($t=2.71$, $p<.05$).

To summarize a set of puzzling findings, television reports portraying political expression in vivid or pallid ways influenced subjects' tolerance, but in inconsistent ways. To analyze why the inconsistency occurred, the underlying phenomena in the stimuli — media coverage and group attributes — need to be sorted out. Thus far, the results allow two interpretations: that the results are due to media portrayals, and that the results are due to subjects' initial feelings about the groups. If the same media results obtain while having subjects' pre-stimulus feelings controlled, a more convincing case can be made for television's influence.

Table 4 about here

Analysis using group affect as covariate.

A second analysis was undertaken to control for subjects' feelings for groups at the pre-test. Subjects' pre-test feeling toward gays and lesbians was found to be a significant covariate in only two cases (willingness to agree with repressive state actions and tolerance judgment), but all data were adjusted for covariates and all contrasts were recalculated. Table 4 presents the results obtained for these data (contrasts of means after adjusting for covariates). Results clearly supported a media effect: All initial results were duplicated while holding constant prior feeling for the group.[5]

CONCLUSIONS

Vivid and pallid news portrayals influence the viewers' decisions to tolerant others. Viewers may use more emotions and more principles than non-viewers, and they may be more inclined to agree with repressive measures against the group depicted.

Recall that the vivid portrayal of the gay men and lesbians included a minister's impassioned speech against homosexual rights and the "evils of homosexual conduct." Such a portrayal highlights a conflict of ideals between homosexuals and organized religions, represented by a minister. The vivid portrayal of white supremacists included the imagery of (1) the counter-demonstrators' vehement objections to the white supremacists, (2) the testimony of a Nazi death camp survivor, and (3) several seconds of a confrontation between demonstrators. This vivid portrayal defined and emphasized white supremacists through the community's resistance. Pallid portrayals of the same stimuli simply removed the vivid, conflict-oriented, dramatic imagery.

According to these data, vivid information influences individuals' tolerance judgments and its components, but the effects are not consistent across depicted socio-political groups. We had expected greater effects of vivid portrayals on subjects' uses of emotion but only partial evidence obtained in support of this prediction. A vivid news report on gay men and lesbians, when compared to the pallid version, encouraged subjects to use more emotions and to agree with repressive measures against the group. The vivid portrayal also repressed subjects' tolerant decisions and a change in feelings toward the group. For reports on white supremacists, the vivid portrayal enhanced subjects' tolerant judgments, their principled reasoning, and led to less use of emotions in their tolerance reasoning.

Another way of looking at these data is to focus on the effects of pallid messages. Pallid information also inconsistently influenced subjects' tolerant reasoning criteria across groups. When compared to vivid information on homosexuals, the pallid version tended to encourage greater tolerance for the group, to repress subjects' use of emotions in their tolerance reasoning, and to stimulate subjects' feelings toward the group such that their feeling became more negative. In contrast, pallid information on white supremacists' tended to elicit subjects' less tolerance, less principled reasoning, and more use of emotions in reasoning.

Comparisons to the control group clarify the effects of both forms of information. Toward gay men and lesbians, subjects in the control group used more emotions in reasoning than did subjects who saw the pallid depiction. Subjects in this control group also used more principles in reasoning than did subjects in the vivid condition. Toward white supremacists, subjects in the pallid information condition tended to be less tolerant when compared to the control group. Subjects exposed to pallid information about white supremacists tended to change their feelings toward the group (negatively) and they tended to increase subjects' agreement with repressive measures again the group.

Viewers exposed to any information about the groups tended to use whatever information prevailed in the stimuli in making their decisions. Without the influence of television, subjects may engage in more principled reasoning (gay/lesbian), be more tolerant (white supremacists), be less willing to repress groups, and perhaps use more emotions in their reasoning.

The results therefore may address differences in the attention-getting device used to portray the social groups. When a vivid portrayal is cast as a conflict of ideals, subjects may be encouraged to be less tolerant, to use more emotions in reasoning, and to agree with repressive measures.

Without the contrast of ideals, subjects were more tolerant but felt more negatively toward the group. But when a vivid presentation is cast as a potential confrontation such as the conflict between Auburn residents and white supremacists, subjects appear to be more tolerant of political expression, use more principled reasoning, and less emotions in their response. Without the conflict, individuals were less tolerant, used more emotions in their reasoning, and tended to more often agree with repressive measures. These data suggest that the experimental stimuli of "vivid" information varied between scenarios such that the "vivid" gay and lesbian report was "pallid" in comparison to the vivid event of a white supremacists' rally, no matter how it was portrayed.

A post-hoc explanation for these findings suggests a paradox: Subjects who view direct confrontations may be encouraged to express their democratic tolerance. Perhaps subjects who are not confronted by direct conflict, tend to pay more attention to their thoughts and feelings about the subject. Short of such conflict, however, televised news reports appear to influence what criteria individuals will use in social judgments.

The results of this experiment should encourage broadcast news producers and reporters to consider whether and how to portray opposition to political expression. Knowing that a portrayal of conflict influences viewers' tolerance for others, reporters and editors ought to thoughtfully consider the ethics and responsibilities of adding information about opposition to a group's political expression.

A strength of this study lays in its design. By comparing the impact of types of news portrayals of political expression, this study has shown that tolerance decisions and the components of that decision are mutable. Viewers may use more or less emotion and principles when making a tolerance judgment, depending on what information is available. News presentations influence individuals' criteria used to make a tolerant decision.

Yet our research design was also limited. Our subjects were primarily of freshmen and sophomores in mass communication classes in a large private university located on the east coast.

These students tend to come from affluent families. Further research ought to examine the effects of vivid and pallid portrayals by using a more diverse subject pool.

This study has broken new theoretical ground in three ways. First, we have extended the domain of research on television's effects to political tolerance, a multi-dimensional, judgmental dependent variable. Second, our study considered the effects of televised news on subjects' feelings, such that we considered affective associative networks of cognition — in this case tolerance and principled reasoning. Last, our conceptualization of vivid information lends itself to more realistic concerns of media practitioners who make decisions about how to portray socio-political groups.

Endnotes

1. Studies which examine media influences or media content with other methods are lacking. Only recently, one researcher broadened the methods employed to include a content analysis of a national sample of newspapers (Steele, 1994).

2. The comparable question for the white supremacists group read "Do you support the right of the white supremacists group to hold a rally?" and "Please explain why you answered as you did."

3. The items were coded: (2) Yes, (1) It depends, (0) No.

4. Calculations of Scott's pi, inter-coder reliability, was based on a random sample of 55 questionnaires (24 percent of the subjects).

5. Indeed, such analyses produced a new finding: subjects' prior feeling toward group suppressed their principled reasoning toward gays and lesbians such that control group subjects used more principles than did subjects in the pallid group.

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Table 1: Comparability of Treatment Groups and Control Group: Independent sample t-tests on Pre-test Measures

	Political Spectrum Ratings Scale: 1) Left-wing Radical, 7) Right-wing Radical	**Similar to most people** Scale: 4) Very Similar, 1) Very Dissimilar	**Closeness to ideas & action of some groups:** Scale: 1) Not at all close, 7) Very close
Group 1 v. Group 2	n.s.	n.s.	n.s
Group 1 v. Group 3	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Group 2 v. Group 3	n.s.	2.16, p<.05	2.71, p<.05

Table 2: Means and Standard Deviations of Dependent Variables by Experimental Conditions

Dependent Variable	**Group 1** Vivid-White Supremacist Pallid- Gay & Lesbian Mean (St. Dev.)	**Group 2** Pallid- White Supremacist Vivid- Gay & Lesbian Mean (St. Dev.)	**Group 3** Control Group Mean (St. Dev.)
Tolerance			
Gays & Lesbians	1.85 (.39)	1.70 (.54)	1.79 (.48)
White Supremacists	1.38 (.71)	1.14 (.81)	1.44 (.78)
Principled Reasoning			
Gays & Lesbians	.71 (.45)	.63 (.48)	.82 (.38)
White Supremacists	.86 (.37)	.72 (.45)	.78 (.41)
Emotions in Reasoning			
Gays & Lesbians	.05 (.22)	.22 (.41)	.20 (.40)
White Supremacists	.12 (.36)	.37 (.48)	.29 (.45)
Affect Δ			
Gays & Lesbians	.25 (1.07)	-.09 (1.31)	-.09 (1.07)
White Supremacists	-.13 (.80)	-.21 (.63)	-.01 (.66)
Repress			
Gays & Lesbians	7.28 (5.19)	9.41 (8.74)	7.49 (5.04)
White Supremacists	18.23 (11.72)	20.71 (14.11)	15.40 (10.51)
Total	n = 76	n = 70	n = 84

Table 3: Results of Multiple t-tests Contrasting Experimental Groups by Dependent Variables

	Contrasts — Gays and Lesbians			Contrasts — White Supremacists		
Dependent Variables	**Pallid v Vivid**	**Pallid v Control**	**Vivid v Control**	**Vivid v Pallid**	**Vivid v Control**	**Pallid v C**
Tolerance	1.88 (Pallid)	n.s.	n.s.	1.92 (Vivid)	n.s.	-2.40 Control
Principled Reasoning	n.s.	n.s	-2.73 (Control)	2.15 (Vivid)	n.s.	n.s.
Emotions in Reasoning	2.86 (Vivid)	2.59 (Control)	n.s.	2.99 (Pallid)	1.95 (Control)	n.s.
Affect Change	-1.83 (Pallid)	1.89 (Pallid)	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	-1.79 (Pallid)
Political Repression	1.99 (Vivid)	n.s.	1.84 (Vivid)	n.s.	n.s.	2.71 (Pallid)
n = 233						

Table 4: Results of Multiple t-tests Contrasting Experimental Groups by Dependent Variables Adjusted for Covariate (Pre-test Group Affect)

	Contrasts — Gays and Lesbians			Contrasts — White Supremacists		
Dependent Variables	**Pallid v Vivid**	**Pallid v Control**	**Vivid v Control**	**Vivid v Pallid**	**Vivid v Control**	**Pallid v C**
Tolerance	2.08 (Pallid)	n.s.	n.s.	1.95 (Vivid)	n.s.	-2.39 Control
Principled Reasoning	n.s.	**-1.72** (Control)	-2.81 (Control)	2.19 (Vivid)	n.s.	n.s.
Emotions in Reasoning	3.02 (Vivid)	2.63 (Control)	n.s.	2.75 (Pallid)	1.86 (Control)	n.s.
Political Repression	2.32 (Vivid)	n.s.	2.19 (Vivid)	n.s.	n.s.	2.62 (Pallid)
n = 233						

Appendix A (1): Pallid Portrayal of Gay & Lesbian Parade Story (Strikeout text is vivid version)

Announcer/on-camera	Members of the Syracuse Gay community took to the streets today, in a celebration of gay pride. Peter Jones was on hand for this show of solidarity.
Take video full, sound up SOT: OUT:...RW, NC 3	(SOT:) (OUT:..RW, Ch. 3 news)
Nat Sot :07	(nat sot)
cart #1	More than 200 people paraded through the streets of Syracuse, arm in arm, for Gay and Lesbian Pride Day. ~~They weren't welcomed by everyone — earlier this week, some members of the Syracuse Common Council tried to block the event.~~
Sot: :16 CG: Harold Defoe-Forrest/Gay Activist IN: "Today is a day..." OUT "...come true."	(SOT) ~~But for some people, today was anything BUT a celebration. The reverend Richard Dickinson spoke out against homosexuality — and the crowd didn't like it.~~
ct#2	(nat sot) (SOT)
NAT SOT :03 ~~SOT: :19~~ ~~CG: Rev. Richard Dickinson~~ ~~In: "I out here ..."~~ ~~OUT "...about it."~~ Nat Sot :05 CT#3	(nat sot) Some of those who came out today are NOT gay — but their children are. To many, this was an unusual sight, but the people here say they have a right to be and act the way they wish. (SOT)
SOT: :06 IN: "Being gay..." OUT: ...biological origin." SOT: :08 IN: "They segregated the ..." OUT: "... you're happy." cg: Marge Krom CT#4	So the rights of gay people were honored today, in the first of what may become an annual parade. Peter Jones, Channel 3 News.

Appendix A (2): Pallid Portrayal of White Supremacists Rally
(Strikeout text is vivid version)

Announcer/on-camera	Residents of Auburn are breathing a sigh of relief tonight. That's because a big rally planned by a group of white supremacists never got off the ground. Randy Wenner reports there were some tense moments, as city residents decided to stand up and be counted.
	(SOT:)
Take video full, sound up SOT: OUT:...RW, NC 3	(OUT:..RW, Ch. 3 news)
ct#1	A crowd began gathering on rooftops and sidewalks more than two hours before the white supremacy rally was supposed to begin. Some came to sign songs of peace--and to remember the lessons learned from the past.
Sot: :15 CG: Beth Broadway/Peace Activist IN: "We also know..." OUT "...citizen do that."	(SOT)
Sot: :12 CG: Shirley Jennings/Auburn resident IN: "I got six..." OUT:"...kids to see."	(SOT)
~~SOT: :15~~ ~~CG: Marv Templeman/Death Camp Survivor~~ ~~In: "I lost 90 ..."~~ ~~OUT "...not clear."~~	~~(SOT)~~
CT#2	The Auburn community turned out in large numbers, in the hope of driving the white supremacists from the town. The hundreds of protesters included members of the National Women's Rights Coalition.
SOT: :11 CG: Sarah Daniels/Women's Rights Activist IN: "We want to..." OUT: ...from doing that."	(SOT)

CT #3

As ~~the hour of the white supremacists' arrival drew closer, there was plenty of tension. Those who had a duty to keep order among the crowd were vastly outnumbered.~~ The people of Auburn lined the streets, in preparation for the arrival of the white supremacists. When the white supremacists finally arrived, the people of Auburn were ready, and the white supremacists never got the chance to make their case.

~~NatSot: :25~~

~~(Nat Sot)~~

Ct #4

The people who had come to rally in support of white power in Auburn were quickly escorted out of town. And the people of Auburn had their own rally, to celebrate what they called their own victory -- against the forces of darkness.
RW, Channel 3 News.

THE IMPACT OF POLITICAL EFFICACY AND MEDIA USE ON POLITICAL PARTICIPATION DURING THE 1992 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN

Huiping A. Huang

School of Journalism and Mass Communication
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Mailing Address:
2020 University Ave. #109
Madison, WI 53705
(608) 233-2632
ahuang@macc.wisc.edu

ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationships between media use and the sense of political efficacy in an electoral context. It aimed to clarify differential effects of television and newspapers on political efficacy, and their joint effects on political participation. Results showed that newspapers were positively related to both internal and external efficacy and to campaign activity, whereas television was negatively related to internal efficacy and to campaign activity. The "videomalaise" hypothesis was relatively supported. Moreover, internal efficacy appeared to be a stronger predictor to campaign activity compared to external efficacy. Interaction effects between newspaper use and external efficacy on campaign activity was found.

The possibility that political efficacy contributes to political participation has invited much attention from researchers in political science (Campbell, Gurin, and Miller, 1954; Welch and Clark, 1975). As the concept of political efficacy refers to an individual's perceived ability to influence the political process, researchers have been particularly interested in studying the concept in electoral contexts. A general picture emerging from these studies suggests that the sense of political efficacy exerts a positive effect on electoral participation. Although most of these studies have considered demographic or situational variables such as policy approval as determinants to political efficacy (Form and Huber, 1971; Iyengar, 1980), they seemed to have neglected the role of the mass media as the major communication agent in the electoral context, and thereby have overlooked the possible intervention of the media on the development of an individual's sense of political efficacy .

While most of the early research works did not explore the relationships between political efficacy and media use, some did discuss an intriguing correlation between the two variables in a limited scope. Researchers found that those who were politically efficacious tended to follow politics regularly, pay more attention to election campaigns and discuss politics with others (Campbell, Converse, Miller, and Stokes, 1960; Almond and Verba, 1963). Later studies that replicated these early findings also revealed a possible correlation between media use and political efficacy. For example, turnout decline was found to result from decreases in partisanship, political efficacy as well as media use (Shaffer, 1981; Teixeira, 1987). But still, the relationships between the mass media and political efficacy was not fully investigated. It is not clear whether the media facilitate or frustrate an individual's sense of political efficacy.

In other words, the question of whether the media legitimize or harm the election campaigns as well as the democratic system remains to be answered. It is the aim of this study to examine the effects of the media on individuals' political efficacy, and how the two variables in turn affect their political participation.

The Media as Agents of Malaise or Legitimation?

The empirical evidence from existing studies examining the role of mass media on political efficacy is rather conflicting. One line of the research proposed a negative relationships between media use and political efficacy. In particular, television has been charged with its effects on decreases in individuals' trust of political systems and ability to understand politics (Lang and Lang, 1959; Manheim, 1976). This speculation has received empirical support. By using experimental and SRC survey data, Robinson (1976) has demonstrated that political efficacy within the experimental groups decreased after watching the CBS documentary, "The Selling of the Pentagon"; moreover, reliance on television coverage of public affairs from the SRC data was associated with lower scores on the efficacy index.

In his study, Robinson used "videomalaise" to describe how television journalism--with its interpretive character and credibility, its constant emphasis on conflict, violence, and the anti-institutional theme-- has caused the more inadvertent viewers to become estranged from the social and political systems. And as the more vulnerable audience further transferred their estrangement to others through polls or the media, the entire society began to show the symptoms of "political malaise."

Robinson's study in fact reflected the ongoing political changes since the 1960's: a steady erosion in feelings of governmental responsiveness to the public (Abramson, 1983), the decline of political party (Nie, Verba, and Petrocik, 1976), and the expanding role of mass media in political campaigns (Chaffee, 1981). The escalating power of mass media, in particular, has directly challenged the earlier "limited effect" model proposed by Klapper (1960). Thus, soon after, Robinson (1977) even announced a change from videopolitics to mediapolitics, and suggested a generalization of malaise effects from television journalism to all news media.

Later empirical research has lent support to Robinson's hypothesis. In a study of nonvoters and the media orientations, O'Keefe and Mendelsohn (1978) found a positive association between attention to televised political news and nonvoting reasons including cynicism about candidates and distrust in candidates and government. Becker and Whitney (1980) also found greater television dependency negatively related to trust and perceived complexity of politics at local level but not at the national level.

Nonetheless, there is also evidence suggesting that the mass media predict positively to political efficacy. In the same study, O'Keefe and Mendelsohn (1978) reported that a negative correlation between attention to political news of newspapers and the nonvoting reasons existed. They suggested that newspaper readers can be more selective in receiving political information, and therefore may experience greater satisfaction with politics in general.

The positive relationships between news media and sense of political efficacy has further obtained empirical support from studies on presidential election campaigns. For instance, not only television, but newspaper and radio news as well, were associated with increased confidence in government institutions (Dennis and Chaffee, 1978). O'Keefe (1980) later also discovered evidence contrary to Robinson's hypothesis. Using data from a study of the 1972 presidential election campaign, he found an association between higher reliance on mass media and more integrative citizen orientations toward the political system. Particularly, newspaper reliance yielded more positive results than television reliance.

In fact, researchers giving more concern on the modes of media usage have suggested that reliance on newspapers for political purposes did exert more positive effect on information holding as well as political efficacy than television reliance (Patterson and McClure, 1976; O'Keefe, 1980; Walker, 1988). Some even found that only newspaper use was positively related to political efficacy among the young, whereas televised hearings generated no significant effect (McLeod, Brown and Becker, 1975). To put it briefly, these findings suggest that newspapers and television may influence individuals' political efficacy in different ways.

In line with this perspective, this study will aim at differentiating the effects of newspaper and television news on individuals' sense of political efficacy. Furthermore, it will explore how individuals' degree of political efficacy and media use jointly influence their political participation in an electoral context.

Change of the Concept of Political Efficacy

As political efficacy is one of the focal concepts examined in this study, it is necessary to know how the concept has evolved in order to grip its relevance to other variables. The concept was first introduced by the Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan. Like party identification, the sense of political efficacy is considered to have important behavioral consequences. In the study reported in *The Voter Decides* (Campbell, Gurin, and Miller, 1954), the concept was considered as unidimensional, and was defined as "the feeling that individual political action does have, or can have, an impact upon the political process, i.e., that it is worth while to perform one's civic duties. It is the feeling that political and social change is possible, and that the individual citizen can play a part in bringing about this change" (p. 187).

Using four questions to measure the feelings of political efficacy variable, the SRC researchers found that political efficacy was positively related to political participation in the 1952 presidential election. The same phenomena held true when demographic variables were controlled. Among demographics, education, income and occupation were positively related to the efficacy scale. When Campbell later used this sense-of-political-efficacy measure in *The American Voter* (1960), the concept was again strongly related to turnout in the 1956 presidential election.

The SRC measure has been modified by other researchers. Many have proposed that the political efficacy indices actually contained two distinct components, the image of self as effective and the image of government as responsive to citizen needs, that is, internal and external political efficacy (Lane, 1959; Balch, 1974; Coleman and Davis, 1976; McPherson, Miller, Welch, and Clark, 1977).

According to Balch (1974), internal efficacy is "the individual's belief that means of influence are available to him", and external efficacy is "the belief that the authorities or regime is responsive to influence attempts" (p. 24). The two dimensions have undergone different levels of change from 1952 to 1980 (Abramson, 1983). While the level of external efficacy has declined consistently since 1960, the level of internal efficacy has remained relatively stable.

The two attitudes may have different patterns in relating to other concepts. For example, Balch (1974) found that political trust was positively correlated with external political efficacy but negatively correlated with internal efficacy. Other studies also supported a strong relationship between political trust and external efficacy (Craig, 1979; Abramson and Finifter, 1981). Internal and external efficacy have been considered as two distinct attitudinal dimensions related to certain socio-demographic variables comparable across nations as well. In the cross-national study conducted by Hayes and Bean (1993), education was found to be a significant predictor of external efficacy in the United States, West Germany, Great Britain and Australia, whereas age was a significant predictor of internal efficacy in West Germany and Great Britain.

The conceptual differences of internal and external efficacy could also account for individuals' different levels of political participation. Gamson (1968) proposed that high sense of political efficacy and low political trust was the optimum combination for mobilization. He implied that when citizens regarded themselves as competent political actors (i.e., when they feel internally efficacious), the prospect of popular action was enhanced (Gamson, 1971).

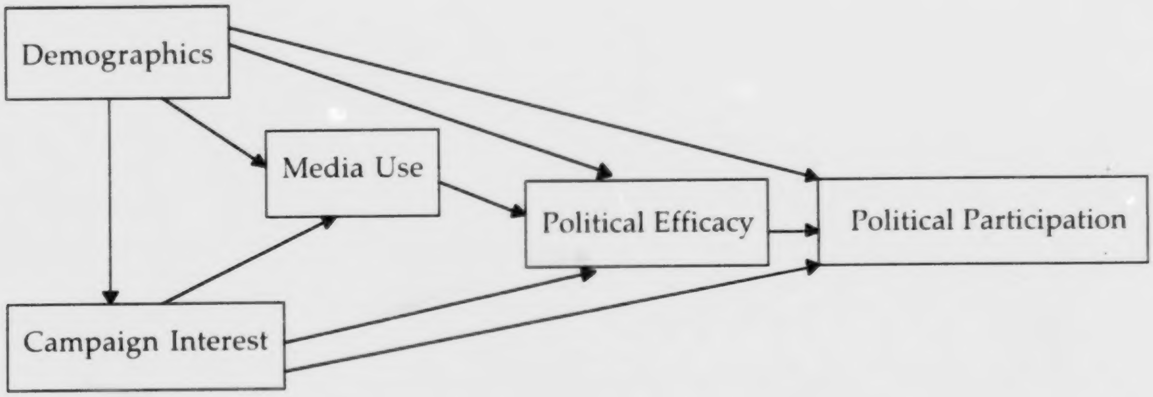
In an attempt to clarify the dimensional properties of political efficacy, Craig (1980) discovered evidence confirming Gamson's implications. He proposed that certain "elite-challenging" activities resulted from low external efficacy, especially when combined with high levels of internal efficacy. Pollock (1983) went further to examine how different attitudinal combinations of the two dimensions would be related to various modes of political participation ranging from low initiative (voting) to high initiative conventional (campaigning, contacting, and communal activity) and unconventional participation (approval of protest activity). He found that those with low internal but high external political efficacy were more likely to vote, whereas those with high internal but low external political efficacy were more likely to participate in campaign activities and even to approve protest activity.

In short, it is generally agreed that the concept of political efficacy contains two components, internal and external efficacy. Moreover, the two attitudinal dimensions are associated with different types of political participation. To develop explanatory processes that could account for the interrelationships among individuals' media use, sense of efficacy and their participation in politics, the distinctions between internal and external efficacy need to be recognized.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

This study addresses mainly three questions. First, can media use influence an individual's sense of political efficacy? In what direction do television and newspaper news exert such effects respectively? Second, can sense of political efficacy influence an individual's level of political participation? If so, how do internal and external efficacy combined to influence an individual's level of political participation? Finally, do media use and political efficacy interact in their effects on political participation? Figure 1 illustrates the relationships among the variables examined in the study:

Figure 1.



As previously stated, although evidence in general shows that the mass media can influence one's sense of political efficacy, findings on the direction of the impact were not quite consistent. Many studies pointed out that newspapers and television have differential effects on political efficacy, with newspapers in particular yielding more positive effects on political efficacy (O'Keefe, 1980; Miller, Goldenberg, and Erbring, 1976). There is even evidence suggesting that political activity and efficacy are positively correlated with newspaper news exposure, reliance, and television news exposure, but are negatively correlated with television reliance (Miller and Reese, 1982).

In fact, the differences in the formats of these two media have been posited to have impact on an individual's sense of political efficacy (Miller and Reese, 1982). While television is mainly an audio and video medium, newspapers rely mainly on printed words. Therefore, watching and reading the two media may require different information processing skills which in turn affect viewers' attitudes and behaviors. This postulation has obtained empirical support. As a study showed, reliance on and exposure to newspaper coverage of public affairs were related positively to reflective integration (i.e., discussing news with others and thinking about it later) and active information processing skills (i.e., heavy processing or interpreting strategies applied to information), but reliance on television was related negatively to the two skills, and it was the reflective integration skill that predicted to greater political knowledge and political involvement (Kosicki, McLeod, and Amor, 1988).

The negative correlation between television and sense of political efficacy may mainly result from the feeling of confusion after viewing television news. Television has been found to do less well than newspapers in conveying the substance of events because its viewers showed higher miscomprehension rate for news stories (Jacoby and Hoyer, 1982). A more recent study also discovered that occasional national television news viewing was associated with decreases in external efficacy, especially for black (Newhagen, 1994). On the basis of these findings, the first set of research hypotheses is:

H1a: Exposure and attention to newspaper coverage of public affairs will positively affect political efficacy.

H1b: Exposure and attention to television coverage of public affairs will negatively affect political efficacy.

The second set of research hypotheses tests the behavioral consequences of media use and political efficacy. Previous studies have suggested that newspaper use does not only increase more political knowledge, but also more voting confidence and political activity than television use (Choi and Becker, 1987; Feldman and Kawakami, 1991; Miller and Reese, 1982). In addition, attention to televised political news was even positively associated with reasons for not voting as noted earlier (O'Keefe and Mendelsohn, 1978). Thus, it is expected that different media use will exert different participatory effects. While individuals' use of newspapers may be positively related to political participation, their use of television may be negatively related to political participation. The first half of the second set of research hypotheses becomes:

H2a: Exposure and attention to newspaper coverage of public affairs will positively affect political participation.

H2b: Exposure and attention to television coverage of public affairs will negatively affect political participation.

The behavioral outcomes of the sense of political efficacy have been widely studied. In general, increases in political efficacy are related to more political participation (Almond and Verba, 1963). Decreases in external political efficacy, in particular, are pointed out as the major factors contributory to the decline of voting turnout (Abramson, 1983). Individuals' different strength of internal and external efficacy have different participatory effects as well. When levels of political participation are identified by individuals' initiative strength, those with high internal and low external efficacy tend to engage in political activity that requires more initiative (e.g., campaigning), whereas those with low internal and high external efficacy tend to participate in a traditional mode of activity (e.g., voting) (Pollock, 1983). Taken together, the second half of this set of research hypotheses is:

H2c: Political efficacy will positively affect political participation.

H2d: Different combinations of internal and external political efficacy will affect political participation differently.

Finally, as the media use has been shown to affect both political activity and efficacy in previous research (Miller and Reese, 1982), it is expected here that media use will alter the effects of political efficacy on political participation. Thus, the next step of the hypotheses-testing is:

H3: The relationship between political efficacy and participation will be affected by the level of media use.

Methods

Data

A cross-section of 421 eligible voters were interviewed by phone in late October, 1992. The sample was drawn from Dane County, Wisconsin, through a variant of random-digit dialing procedures to ensure access to unlisted numbers. Interviews averaged about 35 minutes in length and were done by graduate students or seniors enrolled in a research methods course.

Measurement

Media Use Variables

Previous studies suggest that different measures of media use variables will cause differences in the relationships between the media and sense of political efficacy. In Robinson's "videomalaise" study, the SRC surveys used only a single dichotomous item asking which medium they relied on most. But when researchers later used exposures to media or a more refined media reliance question (i.e., how much do you count on television/newspapers to help you make up your mind about whom to vote for in the presidential election?), the relationships between exposure to and reliance upon the news media and political efficacy turned out to be positive. This suggests that a more direct measure of media use is needed for similar investigation.

Here, in addition to exposure to the media, attention to the media was included. Newspaper public affairs use was measured by six items: exposure and attention to stories about international affairs, national government and politics, and local government and politics. Television public affairs use was also measured by six items: respondents' exposure to morning news programs, national news at 5:30, local news, their attention to news about international affairs, national government and politics, and local government and politics. All media items used a ten-point scale, where 0 means "don't read or watch at all", and 10 means "read and watch all the time".

Campaign Interest

Campaign interest was measured by how interested respondents were in following the current presidential campaign. Respondents were asked to answer the question on a ten-point Likert scale, where 1 means "not at all interested", and 10 means "very interested". The concept was used as a control variable for analyzing the impact of media use on political efficacy and the impact of these two variables on political participation during the election campaign.

Political Efficacy

Six statements on voting and the U.S. government were used to measure the concept of political efficacy. Among them, three were drawn from the original SRC questions: "Public officials don't care about what people like me think", "Voting is the only way that people like me can have any say about how government runs things", and "Sometimes politics and government are so complicated that people like me can't really understand what's going on." The rest of the statements addressed trust in government and opinions of political systems in general: "Every vote counts in an election including yours and mine", "Most of the time we can trust our government to do what's right", and "In America, everyone who wants to has a voice in what the government does." Respondents were asked to answer to what extent they agreed or disagreed with these statements by using a ten-point Likert scale. For the three SRC items, the more they disagreed, the greater their sense of political efficacy, while for the remaining items, the more they agreed, the greater their sense of political efficacy.

Political participation

Two modes of political participation, campaign participation and voting, were used as the dependent variables. Campaign participation, a mode of political participation that requires more initiative than voting, was a composite variable measured by four items. Respondents were asked to answer whether they had contributed money to a political party or candidate, worn a campaign button or displayed a bumper sticker, tried to persuade someone to vote as they planned to, and attended a campaign rally or dinner during the 1992 election year. The sum of affirmative responses to these questions indicated campaign participation. Voting, on the other hand, was measured by respondents' likelihood to vote. On the basis of percent estimates, respondents were asked to estimate how likely it was that they were going to vote on election day.

Data Analysis and Results

Table 1 shows the demographic background of the sample. The average age was 43, average education was 14.5 years, and average income was $38,440. A dummy variable was created for gender, where male was coded as 1, female as 0, so the mean .49 indicated that the number of female respondents exceeded that of male respondents by approximately 2% of the total sample.

A reliability test of the four items measuring campaign participation showed an acceptable Cronbach alpha .60. Nearly half (48 percent) of the respondents did not participate any kind of campaign activity. Thus, the mean of this mode of political participation was only .87 on a 4-point composite scale. But respondents were very highly likely to vote. The average likelihood of voting was 93 percent. Respondents also had relatively substantial media use for public affairs in the electoral context. The means of newspaper and television public affairs use were 6.18 and 5.52, respectively, on a ten-point scale (Table 1).

To examine whether the concept of political efficacy contains two dimensions, a factor analysis based on the principal components method was performed. The six political efficacy items generated two factors, internal and external political efficacy, each with eigenvalue greater than 1 (Table 2). Internal political efficacy was composed of three items, POLITICS COMPLEX, VOTING THE ONLY WAY, and OFFICIAL CARE. The first two items loaded strongly as expected in this dimension. The third item, however, was generally considered as a question tapping external efficacy. But as previous research work has argued that OFFICIAL CARE is a measure of internal efficacy (Acock and Clarke, 1990), the item was retained in the dimension. External political efficacy was composed of the remaining three items, HAVE VOICE, EVERY VOTE COUNTS, and TRUST GOVERNMENT. The TRUST GOVERNMENT item in this dimension was consistent with previous findings, which indicated that political trust was positively correlated with external political efficacy measures (Balch, 1974). A linear composite of factor loadings was created for each factor. The composites represented the two factors as the dependent variables in later statistical analyses. The sample means of internal and external political efficacy were 3.45 and 4.31, respectively, on a ten-point Likert scale.

For hypotheses testing, both Pearson correlation and regression techniques were used. The relationships between the concept of political efficacy and its predictors were first examined. At the zero-order level, male, younger, higher education and income groups were correlated with more internal efficacy. However, female and older people were more likely to have higher external efficacy. Campaign interest was correlated with both internal and external efficacy (Table 3). These same phenomena were found in regression analysis in predicting to political efficacy (Table 4).

For the media use variables, newspaper public affairs use was positively correlated with both internal efficacy ($p \leq .10$) and external efficacy ($p \leq .01$), whereas television public affairs use was negatively correlated with internal efficacy ($p \leq .05$), but positively correlated with external efficacy ($p \leq .01$) (Table 3). Therefore, at the zero-order level, hypothesis 1a, which posited newspapers as agents of legitimation--exposure and attention to newspaper coverage of public affairs will positively affect political efficacy-- was supported. But hypothesis 1b, based on the idea of videomalaise-- exposure and attention to television coverage of public affairs will negatively affect political efficacy-- was supported only for the relationship between television and internal efficacy.

In regression analyses (Table 4), demographics and campaign interest were entered first as the control variables. The effects of media use on political efficacy were mostly explained away by demographics and campaign interest. Thus, only television public affairs use predicted significantly to internal efficacy ($p \leq .10$). Nonetheless, the whole block of media use variables did not significantly increase the variance of internal efficacy. At this level, hypothesis 1a could not be supported, whereas hypothesis 1b was again supported for the relationship between television and internal efficacy only.

The second set of hypotheses tested the relationships between political participation and two variables, the media use and the sense of political efficacy. At the zero-order level, education, income, campaign interest, and newspapers public affairs use were all positively correlated with the two modes of political participation, campaign activity and vote. Television public affairs use was not significantly correlated with either type of activity. Of the two dimensions of political efficacy, internal efficacy was positively correlated with campaign activity ($p \leq .01$), but not with vote. External efficacy was not significantly correlated with campaign activity or vote (Table 5). Thus, hypothesis 2a, which stated that newspaper public affairs use will positively affect political participation was supported, whereas hypothesis 2b which stated that television public affairs use will negatively affect political participation was not. Also, hypothesis 2c, which stated that political efficacy will positively affect political participation, was partially supported.

At the first-order level, demographics and campaign interest were entered as the first two blocks in the regression model. Results showed that both education and campaign interest predicted positively to campaign activity and to vote ($p \leq .01$) (Table 6). When internal and external political efficacy were entered as the third block, internal efficacy also predicted positively to campaign activity ($p \leq .05$), and the change in R^2 was 1.30 percent, which was significant at .10 level. The total variance in campaign activity accounted for by demographics, campaign interest, internal and external political efficacy amounted to 32.05 percent ($p \leq .01$). But neither internal nor external political efficacy predicted significantly to vote. Again, hypothesis 2c was partially supported.

As one of the purposes here was to explore whether media use and political efficacy jointly affect political participation, the two media use variables were later introduced into the regression model as the third block right before the efficacy variables. The results showed that newspaper public affairs use predicted positively to campaign participation ($p \leq .01$). Television public affairs use, on the other hand, predicted negatively to campaign ($p \leq .01$) and to vote ($p \leq .10$) (Table 7). The media use as a block contributed significant variance in campaign activity (4.17 percent, $p \leq .10$), but not in vote. The effects of internal political efficacy on campaign activity were reduced when the media use variables were entered in the regression equation. In addition, the significant relations between television public affairs use and political efficacy were only found at this first-order level. These seemed to suggest a possibility of an existing interaction between political efficacy and media use. In other words, the effects of political efficacy on political participation might depend on the level of media use.

To further examine this possibility, four interaction variables were created by the products of political efficacy and media public affairs use for regression analyses. As education was the only demographic variable predicted significantly to political participation at both zero- and first-order levels, it was used as the control variable in the interaction models. Results showed that only newspaper public affairs use interacted with external efficacy in predicting to campaign activity ($p \leq .10$) (Table 8). Therefore, hypothesis 3 which posited that effects of political efficacy on political participation will depend on the level of media use was partially supported.

The last part of the data analyses assessed the effects of different combinations of internal and external political efficacy on political participation. Respondents were assigned to four mutually exclusive categories according to their scores on internal and external efficacy measures. Individuals scoring below the sample means of both internal and external efficacy were in the "Apathy" category. Individuals scoring on or above the sample means of both dimensions were in the "Integration" category. Individuals high on internal but low on external efficacy were in the "Cynicism" category, whereas individuals low on internal but high on external efficacy were in the "Conformance" category. Then, three dummy variables were created for "Cynicism", "Conformance" and "Integration" in the regression model, which left "Apathy" as the base category.

As Table 9 shows, when demographics and campaign interest were held constant, "Conformance" did participate less campaign activity ($p \leq .05$) than other categories. The incremental R^2 of this block of different attitudinal combinations was significant at .10 level, and the total R^2 was also significant at .01 level. Thus, hypothesis 2d stating that different combinations of internal and external political efficacy will affect political participation differently was partially supported.

The different attitudinal combinations of political efficacy were further used to examine their relationships with media use. Although evidence from testing interactions between media use and political efficacy indicated that the strength of the interactions was weak, a closer look at the interrelationships among the variables might yield different results. Figures 2 to 5 display how the four categories differed in their political participation when media use was considered. Figures 2 and 4 show that conformance group (low internal/high external efficacy) tended to participated less campaign activity than others. Integration group (high internal/external efficacy), in general, showed more propensity for voting (Figures 3 and 5). Newspaper public affairs use tended to have positive participatory effects across groups (Figures 2 and 3), especially for Cynicism group (high internal/low external efficacy). But effects of television public affairs use on political participation were more diversified (Figures 4 and 5). Television public affairs use tended to decrease campaign activity and voting for Conformance (low internal/high external efficacy), but only decrease voting for Apathy (low internal/external efficacy).

Discussion

Among the demographic variables, gender and age were significant predictors of both internal and external political efficacy, whereas education and income were significant predictors of internal efficacy only. In general, male, younger, highly educated and richer people tended to have more internal efficacy. Female and older people tended to have more external efficacy. The gender differences in political efficacy may be attributed to the different socialization processes for the male and female. As Easton and Dennis (1967) suggested, boys may find their political expectations more fulfilled when participating in political spheres than girls, and therefore reinforce their sense of political efficacy in later phases of life. In contrast, although females may feel less politically efficacious than males, they may still be supportive of the norms of democracy, an attitude most of them may learn in childhood.

Regarding the role of media on an individual's sense of political efficacy, the evidence indicated that the two media, newspapers and television, did have different effects on internal and external political efficacy. Increases in newspaper public affairs use were related to increases in both internal and external political efficacy. But increases in television public affairs use were related to decreases in internal efficacy, although were related to increases in external efficacy. The findings suggested that, with the more in-depth reports on public affairs, newspapers may help individuals to understand better about politics, develop more confidence in participating in political processes, and consider the government to be more responsive. On the other hand, the stringent time, economic, and legal constraints imposed on the production of television news, may cause the news content to be more dramatic and limited to two contrasting viewpoints (Ranney, 1983). As a result, even though viewers may still think that the government is responsive, the quick succession of one or two-minute stories on television may hamper individuals' understanding of the political world, and decrease their internal political efficacy. In the latter regard, the finding supported Robinson's videomalaise hypothesis.

In predicting to political participation, the two media were also related to campaign activity in different ways. More newspaper public affairs use was related to more campaign activity, whereas more television public affairs use was related to less campaign activity. The evidence suggested that when individuals gain more substantial information from newspapers, they may be more willing to take part in campaigning to support their causes or favorite candidates, as a result of greater internal political efficacy. But the confusion they feel about the politics from viewing television coverage of public affairs, may reduce their willingness to participate in political processes.

The evidence further suggested that internal and external political efficacy exerted different participatory effects. First, internal efficacy predicted positively to campaign activity significantly, but not to voting. In effect, it is reasonable to see people with stronger confidence in understanding politics and in their ability to influence political processes participating more in a mode of political action that requires more initiative. Second, external efficacy was not related to either type of political participation. It was even negatively correlated with campaign activity, although the correlation coefficient was not significant. For those who already considered the government to be responsive, a phenomenon of withdrawal seemed to have taken place. The implication from the findings is in a sense consistent with the high internal/low external mobilization hypothesis by Craig (1980). Perhaps, when people feel the government is not responsive, they will have more incentive to participate in a more explicit kind of political activity, such as campaigning, in order to realize their causes or get their ideal candidates elected.

When examining the impacts of different attitudinal combinations on levels of political participation, the study demonstrated that those with low internal but high external efficacy (the Conformance category) were less likely to participate campaign activity. That is, individuals who had low confidence in understanding or influencing political processes, but considered the government to be responsive, tended to have less incentive to participate in a more explicit kind of political activity. Their withdrawal from campaign activity was even greater than other attitudinal groups. The findings suggest that those in the Conformance group may not only feel themselves less able to participate in campaign activity but also have an excuse not to participate for they think the government is responding to the public anyway. The results in fact are consistent with earlier empirical evidence:

inefficacious individuals who perceived a responsive political system were less likely to participate in nonconventional actions (Milbrath and Goel, 1977; Pollock, 1983). Moreover, from the evidence above, internal and external efficacy may be inferred to have interacted in their effects on political participation.

To summarize, the present study did help to clarify the different roles newspapers and television play in affecting individuals' political efficacy and participation. It found videomalaise partially confirmatory. Television public affairs uses was related to decreases in internal efficacy and political participation. But it refuted the proposition of "mediamalaise" (Robinson, 1977), in that television was positively related to external efficacy, and newspapers were positively related to both internal and external efficacy as well as to campaign activity.

The present study also suggested that effects of individuals' sense of political efficacy on political participation may be further mediated by their level of media use. The existence of interactions between political efficacy and media use indicated that the two variables did not independently affect political participation. For different attitudinal groups, their political participation might depend on the level of newspapers and television public affairs use as well. Figures 2 to 5 indicate that newspapers public affairs use tended to increase political participation particularly for those with high internal but low external efficacy (Cynicism group). On the other hand, television public affairs use seemed to have greater impact on decreasing voting for those with low internal and external efficacy (Apathy group). But it should be noted that although the study posited a one-way causal relationship between media use and political efficacy, it does not rule out possibilities that the temporal order of these two variables may be reversed or continually affect each other along the time[1]. For further investigation on this regard, a longitudinal study and nonrecursive research models will be needed.

Endnote:

1. Tan (1981) has argued that political orientation variables should be treated as predictors rather than criterion variables in political communication processes. However, the evidence from his study suggested that the strength of these predictors varied across ethnic groups. While political participation and political efficacy significantly predicted media use for whites, political participation and diffuse support were significant for blacks, and political participation was significant for Mexican-Americans. The causal order of political efficacy to media use was valid only for white sample. Although he attributed the results to the effects of extraneous variables such as relevance of media contents to ethnic minorities, the time-order of the variables was still not definite, and would require more direct observation as he suggested.

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Table 1

Descriptive Statistics and Reliability

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	*Alpha*
Demographics			
Gender	.49	.50	---
Age	43.04	17.09	---
Education	14.54	2.71	---
Income	$38,440.00	$19,660.00	---
Campaign Interest	8.25	2.29	---
Media Public Affairs Use			
Newspapers	6.18	2.41	---
Television	5.52	2.26	---
Political Efficacy			
Internal efficacy	3.45	1.18	---
External efficacy	4.31	1.20	---
Political Participation			
Campaign Activity	.87	1.09	.60
Likelihood to Vote	93.06	21.73	---

Note: A dummy variable was created for Gender, Male=1, Female=0.
n = 421

Table 2
Factor Analysis of Political Efficacy

(Principal Components with Varimax Rotation)

	Internal Efficacy	External efficacy
POLITICS COMPLEX	.71	-.14
OFFICIAL CARE	.66	.31
VOTING THE ONLY WAY	.53	-.52
HAVE VOICE	-.05	.76
EVERY VOTE COUNTS	-.05	.62
TRUST GOVERNMENT	.08	.60

Note: $n = 421$

Eigenvalues: Internal Efficacy=1.17; External Efficacy=1.78.

POLITICS COMPLEX: Sometimes politics and government are so complicated that people like me can't really understand what's going on. (Disagree)

OFFICIAL CARE: Public officials don't care about what people like me think. (Disagree)

VOTING THE ONLY WAY: Voting is the only way that people like me can have any say about how government runs things. (Disagree)

HAVE VOICE: In America, everyone who wants to has a voice in what the government does.

EVERY VOTE COUNTS: Every vote counts in an election including yours and mine.

TRUST GOVERNMENT: Most of the time we can trust our government to do what's right.

Table 3
Correlation between Political Efficacy and the Predictors (Zero-order Pearson Correlation)

	Internal Efficacy *r*	External Efficacy *r*
Demographics		
Gender	.16**	-.13**
Age	-.12*	.25**
Education	.30**	-.07
Income	.18**	.04
Campaign Interest	.12**	.17**
Media Public Affairs Use		
Newspapers	.08#	.15**
Television	-.11*	.18**

Note: ** $p \leq .01$ * $p \leq .05$ # $p \leq .10$

Table 4

Predicting to Internal Efficacy and External Efficacy (Regression Analyses)

	Internal Efficacy *Betas*[a]	External Efficacy *Betas*
Demographics		
Gender	.11*	-.09#
Age	-.08#	.22**
Education	.25**	-.05
Income	.12**	.04
Incremental R^2	12.27%**	7.07%**
Campaign Interest	.10*	.15**
Incremental R^2	.91%*	2.18%**
Media Public Affairs Use		
Newspapers	.04	.08
Television	-.10#	.06
Incremental R^2	.75%	1.06%#
Total R^2	37.33%**	32.11% **

Note: a. The betas at each level are standardized regression coefficients controlling for variables in that step and above.

** $p \leq .01$ * $p \leq .05$ # $p \leq .10$

Table 5
Correlation between Political Participation and the Predictors (Zero-order Pearson Correlation)

	Campaign Activity	Likelihood to Vote
	r	*r*
Demographics		
Gender	.08	-.01
Age	-.08	.06
Education	.17**	.18**
Income	.09≠	.15**
Campaign Interest	.24**	.33**
Media Public Affairs Use		
Newspapers	.21**	.18**
Television	-.08	.03
Political Efficacy		
Internal Efficacy	.17**	.07
External Efficacy	-.06	.06

Note: ** $p \leq .01$ * $p \leq .05$ ≠ $p \leq .10$

Table 6
Predicting to Two Modes of Political Participation
(Regression Analyses)

	Campaign Activity *Betas*[a]	Likelihood to Vote *Betas*
Demographics		
Gender	.05	-.02
Age	-.06	.06
Education	.15**	.16**
Income	.06	.10#
Incremental R^2	3.84%**	4.60%**
Campaign Interest	.23**	.31**
Incremental R^2	5.14%**	9.29%**
Political Efficacy		
Internal Efficacy	.10*	-.03
External Efficacy	-.07	.01
Incremental R^2	1.30%#	.06%
Total R^2	32.05%**	37.34% **

Note: a. The betas at each level are standardized regression coefficients controlling for variables in that step and above.

** $p \leq .01$ * $p \leq .05$ # $p \leq .10$

Table 7

Predicting to Political Participation by Media Use and Political Efficacy (Regression Analyses)

	Campaign Activity	Likelihood to Vote
	Betas[a]	*Betas*
Demographics		
Gender	.05	-.02
Age	-.06	.06
Education	.15**	.16**
Income	.06	.10#
Incremental R^2	3.84%**	4.60%**
Campaign Interest	.23**	.31**
Incremental R^2	5.14%**	9.29%**
Media Use		
Newspaper	.20**	.08
Television	-.19**	-.09#
Incremental R^2	4.17%**	.80%
Political Efficacy		
Internal Efficacy	.09#	-.03
External Efficacy	-.08	-.00
Incremental R^2	1.16%#	.09%
Total R^2	37.83%**	38.44% **

Note: a. The betas at each level are standardized regression coefficients controlling for variables in that step and above.
** $p \leq .01$ * $p \leq .05$ # $p \leq .10$

Table 8

Testing Interaction Effects of Media Use and Political Efficacy on Political Participation

(Regression Analyses)

	Campaign Activity	Likelihood to Vote
	Betas[a]	*Betas*
Education	.17**	.18**
Newspaper	.25**	.16**
Television	-.14**	-.03
Internal Efficacy	.06	-.05
External Efficacy	.02	.16
Newspaper X Internal Efficacy	.16	-.00
Newspaper X External Efficacy	-.25#	-.11
Television X Internal Efficacy	-.09	.08
Television X External Efficacy	.16	.00
Total R^2	33.00%**	24.25%**

Note: a. The betas at each level are standardized regression coefficients controlling for education.
** $p \leq .01$ * $p \leq .05$ # $p \leq .10$

Table 9

Predicting to Political Participation by Different Combinations of Internal Efficacy and External Efficacy (Regression Analyses)

	Campaign Activity	Likelihood to Vote
	Betas[a]	*Betas*
Demographics		
Gender	.05	-.02
Age	-.06	.06
Education	.15**	.16**
Income	.06	.10#
Incremental R^2	3.84%**	4.60%**
Campaign Interest	.23**	.31**
Incremental R^2	5.14%**	9.29%**
Political Efficacy		
Low IPE/Low EPE (Apathy)	-.58 (*Intercept*)	4.74 (*Intercept*)
High IPE/Low EPE (Cynicism)	-.04	-.07
Low IPE/High EPE (Conformance)	-.14*	-.04
High IPE/High EPE (Integration)	-.01	-.03
Incremental R^2	1.43%#	.33%
Total R^2	32.26%**	37.70%**

Note: a. The betas at each level are standardized regression coefficients controlling for variables in that step and above.
** $p \leq .01$ * $p \leq .05$ # $p \leq .10$

Figure 2.

Campaign Activity by Newspaper Public Affairs Use

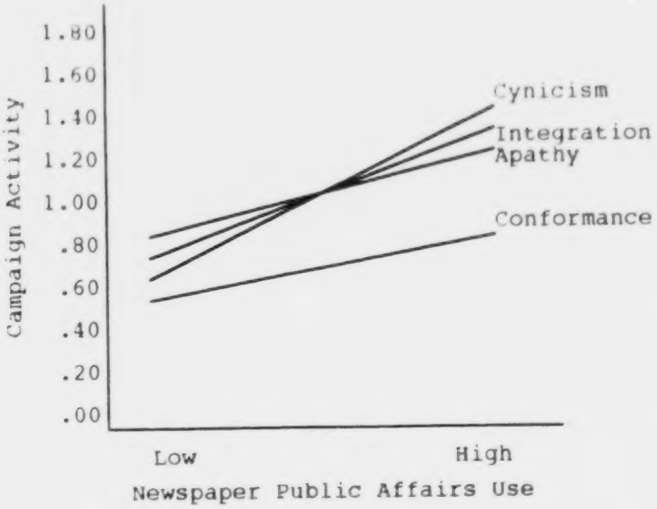
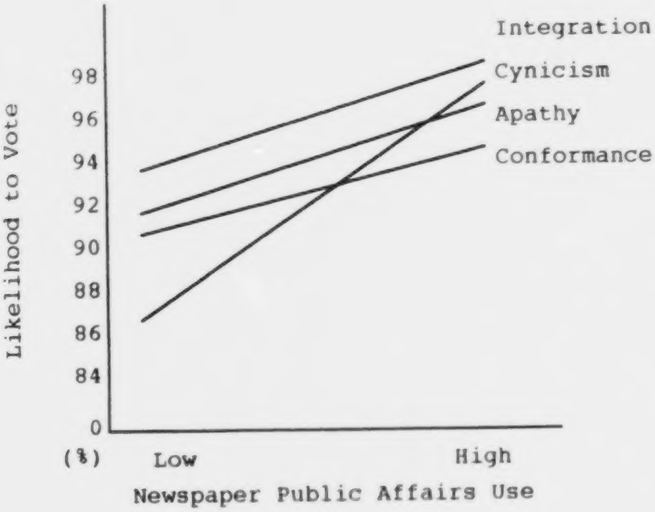


Figure 3.

Voting by Newspaper Public Affairs Use



Note: Apathy= Low internal + Low external efficacy
Integration= High internal + High external efficacy
Cynicism= High internal + Low external efficacy
Conformance= Low internal + High external efficacy

Figure 4.

Campaign Activity by Television Affairs Use

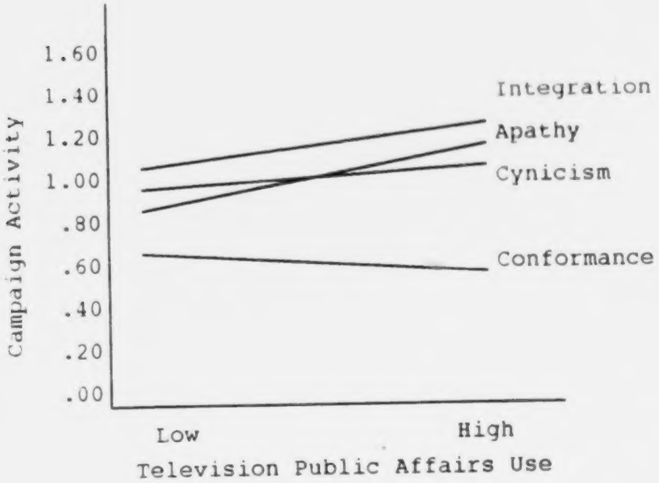
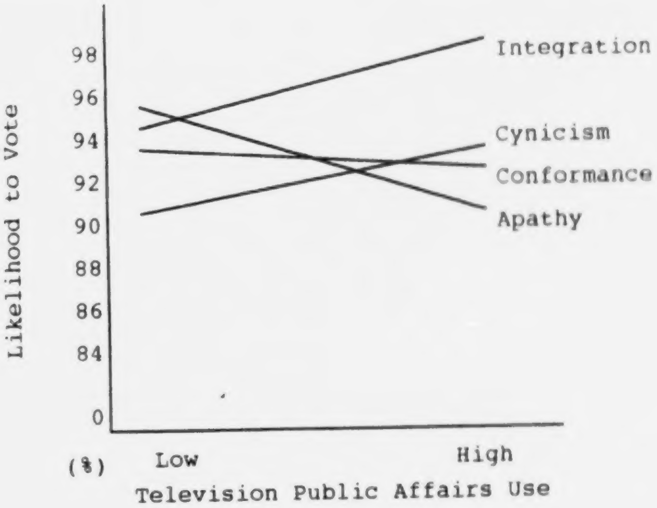


Figure 5.

Voting by Television Public Affairs Use



Note: Apathy= Low internal + Low external efficacy
Integration= High internal + High external efficacy
Cynicism= High internal + Low external efficacy
Conformance= Low internal + High external efficacy

Market Segmentation: How Does a US Company Segment in Overseas Markets?

by

Lalida Silpacharn
309 Mc. Call St
Nashville, TN 37211

Correspondence should be addressed to Lalida Silpacharn at the above address, 615/831-0519 (phone), or m_c_009b@frank.mtsu.edu.

Paper presented at the annual convention of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Media Management and Economics Division, August 1996, Anaheim.

Submitted by: Lalida Silpacharn
Middle Tennessee State University

Submitted to: Media Management and Economics Division of
AEJMC for the 1996 Convention in Anaheim

Abstract

Market Segmentation: How Does a US Company Segment in Overseas Markets?

Many US companies are attempting to persuade those overseas to buy their products, however, only a few companies are successful. Among successful international companies, some realize the importance of identifying market segments which is the first stage in creating marketing strategy and the key to success of international companies in local markets.

This study considers Motorola's attempt to sell its products in cellular and mobile communications market in Thailand. The study expects that Motorola studied and used the existing demographic data to identify its market segments and that Motorola would use this data to create persuasive promotional words and images that reflect these audience characteristics. Findings indicate that Motorola did its homework by studying the existing data before segmenting its target audience. Consistent with the expectation, words and images in advertisements did reflect the target audience characteristics

This study also suggests new target markets that Motorola should approach in order to strengthen its leading position in the cellular and mobile communications in Thailand.

This study is the first to give an international company a way to know how to effectively capture the market in Thailand by taking time to identify the market which will maximize sales and lead to its success.

Send correspondence to:
Lalida Silpacharn, 309 Mc. Call St. Nashville, TN 37211
(615) 831-0519

Market Segmentation: How Does a US company Segment in an Overseas Market?

Statement Topic

As the rates of potential growth in some parts of the U.S. market have slowed down, many U.S. companies are attempting to persuade those overseas to buy their products. However, only a few companies are successful. Among these profitable international companies, some realize the importance of market research which provides information about marketing decisions including target market determination.[1]

International marketing strategy starts with international market assessment. This assessment typically involves a series of analyses aimed at pinpointing specific offerings and geographic targets. The first step in this process is determining who might be interested in buying products or services, in other words, who would be the target markets.[2] Identifying market segments is the first stage in creating marketing strategy; therefore, the success of international companies in local markets depends on how well they can segment their target market.

This case study considers Motorola's attempt to sell its products in the cellular and mobile communications market in Thailand. It will explore the extent to which Motorola accurately identified the needs and interests of its perceived target groups and how it used these demographic data to create persuasive promotional messages.

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[1] Ronald W. Hasty and R. Ted Will , Marketing (New York, NY : Canfeild Press, 1975).
[2] Alan M. Rugman & Richard M. Hodgetts, International Business : A strategic management approach (McGraw-Hill Inc., 1995).

Literature Review

In a push economy where producers control the market and there is more demand than supply, the key to success is market segmentation.[3] To succeed in a competitive market, it is necessary to outsmart competitors and provide value to buyers. Target marketing achieves both these objectives. Target marketing allows companies to tailor products and provide value more cost effectively to buyers. The key to segmenting markets is to segment in way responsive to buyers' needs, to provide value, and to strengthen a company's competitive advantage.[4] Singletary and Stone suggested that a company can compete effectively if it knows its adversary's strengths and weaknesses. Coorientation--the extent to which two or more persons are able to communicate with each other; with a simultaneous orientation to concepts, objects or persons--can help in determining how closely competing managers agree on the other's demographic strengths.[5] Chaffee and McLeod's concept of coorientation suggests that if person A were to persuade person B, then person B would have to first understand the communication. Understanding should be greatest when the orientation of A and B to object of communication is closest.[6]

With a strong segmentation, a firm will increase output and value in response to an increase in demand uncertainty. With weak segmentation, firms' outputs and values

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[3] Robert Michel, Journal of Business Strategy, October, 1992, p. 48-53.
[4] Von Hippel., Business Marketing, November, 1992, p. 114-118.
[5] Michael W. Singletary and Gerald Stone, "Coorientation," Communication Theory and Research Application (Iowa State University Press, 1988), p. 108-109.
[6] Steven H. Chaffee and Jack M. McLeod, "Sensitization in Panel Design : A Coorientational Experiment," Journalism Quarterly 45(4): 661-669.

decrease with an increase in demand uncertainty.[7] Segmentation is receiving much attention in research circles. It refers to an examination of how consumers perceive the structure of a market, and to forecasting the demand for a potential product in the market.[8] Market segmentation can be applied to every type of organization. For example, a magazine's success depends on how effective the plan is for reaching a specific readership whose needs, wants, and desires match the publication's general purpose and philosophy.[9] The senior editor of the *American Journalism Review* also described that attracting and keeping readers is the key to saving America's newspapers. He wrote, "Because consumers have different needs, newspapers should consider customizing themselves for each reader." [10]

As the purpose of this study is to examine how well Motorola accurately identified its target audience segments, the above literature provides a general understanding of the importance of market segmentation. Hippel's literature explains the key elements to segmenting markets while many writings like Robert's and Stepp's describe how to segment the market. Later, the study will probe the extent to which Motorola has applied the above literature in identifying its audience.

During a forum on the global marketplace, Jennings related that the ability to specialize and segment markets within a global marketing strategy is the main ingredient for success in the international marketplace.[11] Dispute over standardization/ customization in international marketing became more intense with the 1983 publication of a controversial article by Theodore Levitt, in which he argued that technology, communication, transport, and travel have participated in creating a new commercial reality: the emergence of global markets for standardized consumer products. A global marketing strategy geared to satisfy this new reality would require that standardized products be sold in the same way everywhere. However, differences in consumer needs and preferences, in the economic, social, legal, and competitive environments must be adequately considered so as to weigh the positive aspects against the negative aspects associated with the standardization question.[12]

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[7] Tessitore Antony, Journal of Economics & Business, May 1994, p. 66-75.
[8] Johnson M. Richard, Marketing Management, 1995, p. 49-53.
[9] Sentinery Robert, Folio: the Magazine for Magazine Management, June 1995, p. 98.
[10] Carl Sessions Stepp, "Ten Ways to Keep Your Readers," American Journalism Review, April 1993, p. 24.

Concerning words and images, global advertising presents many potential landmines. Not only does the same work take on different meanings in different countries, but also what is considered the norm in one place can be insulting, weird or even taboo in another. Every marketer must carefully examine the specific product category and target audience to make sure that what is being offered has universal appeal and benefits.[13] Hill and Winski also suggested that advertising is extremely difficult to standardize across countries primarily because prospective consumers for a given product live in very different social, economic, and political environments. Standardization is particularly difficult with message construction, where differences in product knowledge, benefit expectations, buying motives, and languages make the use of a standardized message across countries almost impossible.[14] However, some argue that multinational companies are able to use the same strategy abroad as they have at home. This is particularly true in promotion where messages can carry a universal theme. The ground belief is that if many products fill similar worldwide needs, they can use a universal message and reduce advertising costs at the same time.[15]

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[11] John Jennings, National Underwriter, April 1993, p. 7.
[12] Baalbaki B. Imad and Malhotra K. Naresh, International Marketing Review, 1993, p. 19-44.
[13] James Caporimo, "Worldwide advertising has benefits, but one size doesn't always fit all," Brandweek, 36:16 (1995).

Since it is still debated whether multinational companies should use the standardized advertising or use different messages to persuade particular market, this case study will try to find out if Motorola used the same messages worldwide or modified its advertising strategy to approach its local customers. Later, if Motorola does not use the standardized message, the study will explore the extent to which Motorola used the existing demographic data to create persuasive messages to attract Thai consumers.

An anonymous source in the Ogilvy & Mather (Thailand) said that as mobile phone is a high-tech, complicated and expensive product, users must have a certain level of education to realize its importance and its functions. Level of education also relates to level of adaptability. High-educated people generally have more ability to adapt to new technology, more needs and more purchasing power. They belong to an upper-middle class or higher, who are always willing to try new products, earn enough money to afford

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[14] Julie Skeer Hill and Joseph M. Winski, "Good-bye Global Ads," Advertising Age, November 16, 1987, p, 22.
[15] Alan M. Rugman & Richard M. Hodgetts, International Business : A strategic management approach (McGraw-Hill Inc., 1995).

expensive products. Motorola management realizes that it has to segment the market primarily on the basis of level of education and social-economic status. The company has learned that success requires not only quality in production but also effective marketing. It pursues a variety of promotional strategies to reach different market segments.

Again, the purpose of the study is to explore the extent to which Motorola accurately identified its perceived target groups. This above information tells us that level of education and socio-economic status are the main factors Motorola management used in identifying its target audience.

Competitive Realities

The cellular phones were made available to the private sector in Thailand in 1987 when its economic growth was ranked among the highest in the world. Helping to sustain the unprecedented level of business and commercial activity has been a progressive government policy to privatize communication services, giving full rein to market forces in the field of mobile and wireless systems. As a result, the communications sector grew by nearly 200 percent annually between 1991 and 1993.[16] Currently, the number of analogue system subscribers totals to 800,000. Among many players, only Nokia and Motorola capture the largest percentage of market shares, amounting to 30% and 35% respectively.[17] Depending upon their promotions and new facilities and services provided to customers, these two major brands take turn in being

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[16] Total Access Communications Company's Profile, 1994, p. 6.
[17] "Telecommunication Market," Bangkok Post, June 1995, p. 6.

the market leader. With Nokia's possessing the same product technology and targeting the same market segmentation, Motorola considers Nokia as its direct competitor and realizes the importance of competitive analysis.[18]

Competitive intelligence is critically important and intelligence gathering should be given a high priority in the organization.[19] An analysis of individual competitors consists of examining objectives, strategies, performance to date, strengths and weaknesses and then predicting the future behavior of each, including the likelihood that each will change its strategy and how it will respond to moves made by others.[20] Advertising strategies employed by Nokia and Motorola indicate that many of their advertisements promote the cellular phone industry as a whole. Because the nature of the product requires a certain degree of knowledge to understand its usage and facilities, media are used to educate, provide general information, and arouse desire among customers. However, when it comes to decision making, personal selling plays an important part in influencing and convincing customers to buy a specific brand. Advertisements simply create brand awareness and brand recall. Therefore, it can be implied that Nokia's communications, in one way or another, help Motorola to reach its target market more frequently and effectively and simultaneously take away audience's attention toward its product.[21]

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[18] An anonymous source in Ogilvy & Mather (Thailand). Personal Communication, September, 1995.

[19] Orville C. Walker Jr., Harper W. Boyd Jr., and Jean Claude Larreche, Marketing Strategy : Planning and Implementation (Richard D. Irwin Inc., 1992). p. 129.

[20] Dumaine Brian, "Corporate Spies Snoop to Conquer", Fortune Magazine, November 1988, p. 68.

Research Questions

Since the review of literature indicates that most western companies lean more on considering differences in consumer needs and preferences, in the economic, social, legal, and competitive environments when targeting market segments abroad, it is posited that Motorola did its homework by using the existing demographic data to segment their markets. This study also expects that once Motorola knew its target audience and market, it would use these demographic data to create persuasive promotional words and images that reflect these audience characteristics.

Management Audience Assumption

The characteristics of Motorola's target markets are considered proprietary and are not allowed to be publicly disclosed to prevent its competitors from studying its strategy. However, our anonymous source in the Ogilvy & Mather (Thailand) agreed to describe in words and asked to use these data for academic purposes only. All other sources are cited in the footnotes.

International companies that launch a new product to customers from another nation find different demand, needs, cultures and behaviors. Motorola realized that the situation and consumer analysis would help target the right audience, better position itself in the market and--above all-- lead to its success in a competitive market. Therefore, Motorola spent plenty of time studying the market before penetrating.

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[21] An anonymous source in Ogilvy & Mather (Thailand). Personal Communication, September, 1995.

Rural Marketing Strategy

Having studied the nation's communications demands from the existing data, Motorola determined that the telecommunications sector in Thailand was rapidly evolving, fueled by the country's strong economic expansion. More than ever before, the fast pace of business demands quick and reliable access at all times--either in the office or on the move. Thailand must improve its telecommunications infrastructure by expanding the coverage of conventional lines throughout the country and upgrading the existing network. A severe shortage of land-lines, especially in suburban and rural areas, has barred many people from gaining access to communications.[22] This problem, however, is an opportunity for those selling cellular telephones.

Motorola chose groups of businessmen and high-ranked officials who travel to or live in rural areas as their primary target group (see Chart 1). The existing data show that 82% of the total population live in rural areas (see Table 1). Demographically, they are businessmen, merchant proprietors, professionals and elderly officials whose monthly income per household are Bht. 35,000 or over (see Table 2). They need the product that allows them to communicate with other people and to gain fruitful information for their career advancement. High level of adaptability, education and income make possible for them to afford the high-priced products like cellular phones.

Urban Marketing Strategy

After successfully capturing the rural area market, Motorola expanded its target

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[22] "Mobile Phone Firm Targets 100,000 Subscriber," Bangkok Post, February 1994, p. 26.

group to executives who live in Bangkok and urban areas and belong to the upper class. The company commissioned a survey and found that the new segments were large and profitable enough to serve. Moreover, the management concluded that it was easier to convince these people to buy its product since they possess a strong financial status and can afford to purchase relatively luxurious, expensive products. Although they represent the top 10% of the total population, the company concluded this segment would increase Motorola's market shares in the cellular market (see Table 3). These affluent audiences also act like an opinion leader in a society. Opinion leaders are found to be exposed to media appropriate to their sphere of influence than their followers. They attend more out-of-town meetings and have more out-of-town contacts as well. Opinion leaders and their followers are very similar and usually belong to the same groups. It is highly unlikely that the opinion leader will be very far ahead of followers in level of interest in a given topic. Interpersonal relations are not only networks of communication but also sources of social pressure to conform to the group's norms and sources of social support for the values and opinions an individual holds.[23] Middle class consumers, who want to uplift themselves in society, are likely to purchase products used by the upper class. Whatever people perceive as a high-quality product can increase their self-esteem. Therefore, the upper class plays a vital role in influencing the purchasing behavior of the middle class. Once introduced, Motorola's cellular phone gained greater acceptance from this target market because it could fulfill their needs to communicate on the move. In addition to status as a motivation for purchase, another important factor in boosting the sales of mobile phones is the traffic condition. Since 1992, the traffic in Bangkok has been so heavy that businessmen often lose their sales because they are trapped in that traffic, unable to communicate immediate decisions on fast-changing projects.

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[23] Werner J. Severin and James W. Tankard, Jr., Communication Theories: Origins, Methods, And Uses In The Mass Media (3rd ed.) (While Plains, NY: Longman, 1992).

Product Consumption Among the Affluent

According to the anonymous source, this target audience consists of executives or high-ranked government officials who graduated or experienced living abroad. They are trend-setters who like to possess the state-of-the-art technology products. They live in a 3-bedroom house or condominium located in the city, drive BMW or Mercedes Benz, wear Rolex or Patet Phillippe watch, play golf for leisure or for business negotiation, read English magazines and newspapers, possess memberships at high-class sport clubs, have cable TV or satellite dish at home to receive worldwide news, travel abroad more than once a year (either for relaxation or business purposes) and use expensive items like Montblanc pen, Luis Vuitton purse, etc. They are the fortysomethings who have successful lives and strong financial status.

Once Motorola acquired the upper class as its client base, it moved on to target the middle class, which represents the two-thirds (37 %) of the country's population. The management believed that the company would have a stronger position in the market, if Motorola could turn these people into its loyal customers. However, Motorola realized that it might be more difficult to persuade and convince this target to buy its product because they do not have such high income and education as the former target does.

The middle class consists of middle managers, salespersons and junior government officers whose household income monthly is Bht. 6,000-34,999. Unlike the more affluent, they buy a cellular phone by paying it through installments because of the limited income. They generally have diploma or a vocational or bachelor degree. Some may have higher degrees (see Table 4). They live in a two-bedroom house or a townhouse located in the suburban area, drive medium-priced cars like Honda Civic and like to buy imported products. They are twenty/thirtysomethings who are envious of the more affluent. Most middle-income earners who buy cellular phones are concerned with design first, then performance. They struggle to acquire expensive, high-class products to gain acceptance from the upper class. Referring to the five categories of adoption of an innovation, they fall into the early majority group, which includes 34 % of those who adopt. These individuals display less leadership than early adopters, but they tend to be active in community affairs, thereby gaining respect from their peers. They do not like to take unnecessary risks and want to be sure a new product will prove successful before they adopt it.[24] For instance, they may buy a pager as a means to contact with others. Once, the cellular phone becomes popular among the upper class or the early adopter, they manage themselves to acquire it.

Currently, Motorola enjoys the leading position in the cellular and communications market. However, situations change rapidly in the fast-moving business. Among many players, only Motorola and Nokia capture the largest percentage

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[24] Orville C. Walker Jr., Harper W. Boyd Jr., and Jean Claude Larreche, Marketing Strategy : Planning and Implementation (Richard D. Irwin Inc., 1992). p. 155-156.

of market shares amounting to 35% and 30% respectively. If Motorola does not try to segment new market or expand the product usage, it won't be difficult for Nokia to take place as the market leader. Asked which segmentation should be a new target, the source replied, "Although the price of the product is presently low, it is still too high for the lower class to afford. I don't think the lower class is considered a target group for the product. To me, two segments have high potential to boost up sale and market share of Motorola. The first segment is the teen market. Teenagers represent the largest group of population and have great buying power and sales potential. Moreover, teenagers are easy to adopt to new technologies and easy to persuade. Another segment is the early majority. They are the middle class whose occupations do not demand much communication on the move. For instance, they are academic professors, auditors, small business owners, and etc. These people earn enough income to buy a mobile phone but they do not have needs. As a marketer, Motorola has to create needs among them."

Words and Images

The anonymous source in the Ogilvy & Mather's Thailand office cited that Motorola was one of a few companies that used different messages to approach different needs in various markets. Motorola tailor-made its advertising strategy to satisfy the needs of Thai consumers. Most of Motorola's advertisements applied global concept but used regional execution. Thai casting and copy were used in most of Motorola's advertisements. Nonetheless, these advertisements had to meet the US standard even if regional executions were used.

The source commented that at present there are two major sponsors for advertisements of Motorola's cellular phone: the first one is Motorola company and the other is various distributors of Motorola cellular phones. The functions of advertisements paid by these two sources are different. The ads sponsored by Motorola company are to promote industry as a whole and to create brand awareness and brand recall. Audience characteristics are often portrayed in the ads. For example, some ads, present a scene of a businessman talking on a mobile phone while driving a BMW or an executive playing golf and simultaneously negotiating business on a mobile phone. For distributors, their main concern in to have as much sales as they can. They do not pay attention to building brand identity or creating brand awareness; therefore, their ads are hard sales. Only price is mentioned. No audience characteristics are shown.

Alternative Audience Segmentations

This section will consider how well Motorola identified its primary audience and will suggest additional market segments. It will then critique what media vehicles were used and the extent to which the words and images were targeted to the audience.

Who is the audience?

Upper and middle class as primary segments

The existing data indicate that Motorola has targeted an appropriate audience. An anonymous source in the Ogilvy & Mather's Thailand office commented that Motorola has done a good job in targeting the middle and upper class as its primary audience segments. Based on the existing demographic data, the middle and upper class in Bangkok and in up-country urban areas are large enough to serve. The middle and upper class in Bangkok and in up-country areas possess every requirement for mobile phone subscribers. The product being high priced and technologically advanced requires that buyers have great buying power and high level of education and adaptation. The source also said that Motorola went the right way by targeting the upper class market first. At the time the product was introduced into the market, the price was so high that only the upper class or the top-rank officials and executives could afford. Once the product gained some popularity and acceptance, the price went down to a point that middle class or middle managers could purchase.

Teenagers as new segment

However, there are other audience segments that will work as well. The first group I would recommend is teenagers. Researchers say the teen population will continue to climb through 2005. Retailers need to pay special attention to the way they treat their teenage customers. To many, researching teens' needs and desires is an important step to success.[25] Teenagers are an important segment of the market, not only for present consumption but also for the revenue they will provide business in the future. Their individual spending power increases with their age and with national economic growth.[26] Another significance of the teenage market and the importance attached to it by marketers comes from the youths' large discretionary income and purchasing power. This means that businesses benefit directly by immediate sales and they can also count on ultimate long-term product trends. This large discretionary income means they are relatively free to spend their money on luxury goods. The youth market has been described as low in brand loyalties and high in new-product interests. For marketers, this suggests that youths should be receptive to advances in technology such as the new compact disc, computer, and other advanced products.[27] According to the existing demographic data, youths aged 10-29 years are the largest group in sex and age category and the second largest group in the occupation category.(see Table 6 and Chart 1) Therefore, Motorola should try to capture the youth market in order to increase its market share which will lead to a strong position in the market. Nonetheless, not all teenagers are considered its target market. Only those who are members in affluent families are viewed as the new target market because income clearly dictates the purchase of the product.

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[25] Mary Nelson , Sporting Goods Business, July 1995, p. 92-93.
[26] Ronald W. Hasty and R. Ted Will, Marketing (New York, NY: Canfield Press, 1975).

Early majority as new segment

Another group that Motorola should target is the early majority. People in the early majority category (34 percent of the market) are the most deliberate of all adopter categories. They will usually not adopt a new product until the early adopters are satisfied with it and communicate their opinions of its value. Thus, they may consider an innovation for a long period of time before adopting. The early majority are slightly above average in age and education. They belong to formal organizations, but they are likely to be members rather than leaders. The early majority rely more heavily on informal sources of information and subscribe to fewer magazines and journals than do previous adopters, but they have considerable contact with salespeople. They possess little opinion leadership.[28]

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[27] Douglas W. Mellott, Jr., Fundamentals of Consumer Behavior (PennWell Publishing Company, 1983). p. 142.

How can Motorola reach them and what should be said to them?

The cellular and communications market in Thailand is in the growth stage of the product life cycles. Both conventional wisdom and the various portfolio models suggest there are advantages in quickly entering--and investing heavily to build share in--growth markets. For the share leader in a growing market, its strategic objective is to maintain its leading relative share as the market expands. Share maintenance for a market leader involves two important marketing objectives. First, the firm must retain its current customers, ensuring that those customers remain brand loyal when making repeat or replacement purchases. Second, the firm must continue to capture the major portion of sales to the growing number of new customers entering the market for the first time.[29]

The upper and middle class segment

To fulfill the first objective, Motorola has to inform the upper and middle class groups about product improvements and keep the brand name fresh in their memories through advertising. Despite that a mobile phone is a durable product, Motorola can encourage current customers to make a repeat purchase by promoting a new model which provides more options. The message should stress the new technologically advanced advantages the new model has. It is likely that the new message may compare the new model with the existing Motorola products or with the competitors'. Nonetheless, the main objective of the new message is to create a repeat purchase which may result in customers selling their current Motorola mobile phone to buy the new model or, for the better result, they may switch from using competitor's products to buy Motorola. To build an image that Motorola is the one of the largest telecommunications companies committed to provide the best, more reliable and least cost solutions to all communication requirements, a public relations campaign has to be continually held. Informative advertising conveying message to create a good public image for the company or to educate consumers for general knowledge about telecommunications and mobile phone should be placed in printed media. The informative advertising will not only help keeping Motorola brand name fresh in their memories but also, in some cases, convert nonusers into customers without having to modify the product, especially when potential customers hold misconceptions or unjustifiably negative attitudes about the product.[30]

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[28] Ibid p. 563.

[29] Orville C. Walker Jr., Harper W. Boyd Jr., and Jean Claude Larreche, Marketing Strategy : Planning and Implementation (Richard D. Irwin Inc., 1992). p. 161-162.

The second objective for Motorola to maintain its leading share in the market is to continue to capture the new market segments. Based on the existing demographic data, Motorola should try to reach these two segments: teenagers and early majority. Certainly, Motorola should use different words and images to convey its messages to these two segments. The teenager segment

In entering the teen market, Motorola should consider following the same strategy used in penetrating the adult target. Start with trying to capture the upper class teen-agers and use them as its client base. Subsequently, the middle class youths will struggle to possess the mobile phone because of peer pressure. Real or imagined pressures to conform to the norms of the groups have been observed by researchers for some time. For many individuals there are very positive and sometimes necessary reasons to conform to group behavior. These social pressures can provide stability for both individual members and the total group in the common pursuit of functional goals. Consumers have been observed to imitate the behavior of their groups by purchasing certain product brand.[31] Modern psychology shows that human beings are social animals whose attitudes, behavior, and even perceptions, are greatly influenced by other people. The other people that influence them are in the groups that they belong to. Groups often share certain rules or standards, and these can be referred to as norms. Norms operate in almost every area of behavior.[32] Referring to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, their motivation to buy a mobile phone derives from the need for emotional security or recognition. We all need to be treated as unique individuals who are wanted and are important. Closely associated with the need for recognition is the need for acceptance: we all need to be part of and to identify with groups. Ample evidence exists to suggest that much of our purchasing behavior is influenced by the motive to be a part of a group--to do that which is acceptable to our friends and associates.[33]

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[30] Ibid p. 320.

To better capture the new segment, Motorola needs to modify its marketing mixes: product, price, place, and promotion. Whereas the mobile phone targeted at businessmen has bulky and functional look, the mobile phone for the new segment

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[31] Ibid p. 224-225.

[32] Werner J. Severin and James W. Tankard, Jr., Communication Theories: Origins, Methods, and Uses in the Mass Media (3rd ed.) (White Plains, NY: Longman, 1995).

[33] Ronald W. Hasty and R. Ted Will , Marketing (New York, NY : Canfeild Press, 1975). p. 103.

should be sleek, flashy, and modern designed. The product should also provide a broad selection to satisfy their needs because generally teen-agers like to purchase merchandise that they feel is specifically designed for them. They feel the need to be individualistic and independent in their selection of merchandise, yet peer group attitudes still force a tendency toward conformity.[34] Unlike the former segments, the new target group uses mobile phone for pleasure not for business purposes. The modified product may provide less features to lower the unit cost. As a result, the price can be reduced to appeal to new segments. In Thai culture, it is unusual for ones who attend school or college to work as part-time. Therefore, they do not have any income. Whatever they want, they have to ask for money from their parents. If the price of the product is low, their parents are more willing to pay for it. Apart from lowering the price, install payments will make the product more affordable for them.

Concerning channels of distribution, Motorola currently has developed the WorldPhone Shop, a franchised communications service center, to expand easy access to its services. Applying the convenience store principle, WorldPhone Shops are set up at key locations throughout Metropolitan Bangkok and in suburban areas. Each shop carries a huge range of handphones and other mobile communications equipment for purchase, as well as offering repair services.[35] The company should expand its store to be located near campus compounds especially in private colleges/universities where most of the new target market are attending. Westernized shopping malls where teenagers like to hang out are another major locations.

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[34] Ibid p. 93.
[35] Total Access Communications Company' Profile, 1994.

Advertising strategies will be a key in successfully capturing this market. Teenagers mostly do not rationalize when making any purchases. They are highly inspired by messages from TV commercials or other media. Sensational and emotional messages are particularly appealing to teenagers. A new product image should be created. In Thailand, teen-agers nowadays have more activities besides going to school. It has become usual to see youths hanging around in discotheques late at night or shopping at department stores after school. Across the world, teen-agers share similar likes and dislikes. They spend a significant portion of their money on travel and other leisure activities: on dining out, clothing, television and radio sets, and on automobiles.[36] Their need for a product to allow them to contact their friends to make appointments or change in time and place to meet, has to be fulfilled. Motorola's UIP (unique image positioning) should be that a mobile phone is the best way to keep them update at all times no matter where they are.

Another important consideration in designing a marketing message is: Should it be one-sided or two-sided. One-sided messages present only the benefits of products or services and give no hint of their possible limitations. Two-sided messages, on the other hand, emphasize product benefits while recognizing that an item may have some drawbacks. Many studies suggest that one-sided ads are more effective when the consumer has little product information and low level of education, when consumers are using the advertiser's products and are satisfied with them.[37] Motorola should implement the one-sided advertisement because the teen target does not know much about the product. Mostly, they buy the one their parents are using and satisfied with. The message should emphasize the new generation, who keeps abreast of the latest developments and information. The high price of the product should not be mentioned in the message, since it may cause hesitation to make a purchase.

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[36] Ronald W. Hasty and R. Ted Will, Marketing (New York, NY: Canfied Press, 1975).

Celebrity endorsement is another technique that should be employed. Celebrity endorsement has become a prevalent form of advertising in every country. Several studies have examined consumers' response to celebrity endorsement in advertising. Findings show that celebrities make advertisements believable and enhance message recall. Furthermore, celebrities aid in the recognition of brand names, create a positive attitude towards the brand, and create a distinct personality for the endorsed brand. Ultimately, celebrity endorsements are believed to generate a greater likelihood of customers' choosing the endorsed brand. Thus, the use of celebrity endorsement is an advertising strategy that should enhance the marginal value of advertisers' expenditures and create brand equity by means of the "secondary association" of a celebrity with a brand.[38] For teenagers, young moviestars or singers should be used as celebrity endorsement in an advertisement.

The early majority segment

Since the early majority are those who earn enough income to buy a mobile

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[37] Douglas W. Mellott, Jr., Fundamentals of Consumer Behavior (PennWell Publishing Company, 1983). p. 617-618.

[38] Jagdish Agrawal and Wagner A. Kamakura, "The economic worth of celebrity endorsers: an event study analysis," Journal of Marketing, 59(3):56-57 (1995).

phone but they do not have needs, there is no need for Motorola to modify its product, price nor place. Only its promotional strategy is needed to be fine-tuned to create needs among them. The message should promote new ways to use the product. It might stress the family relations or the safety issues. Referring to the heavy traffic condition in Bangkok, parents have to leave home early in the morning and go home late at night to avoid congested traffic during rush hours. As a result, they do not have time to talk to their children because when they go home, their children are already asleep. The advertising should convey that by using a mobile phone, parents can reach their children even though they get trapped in the traffic jam or children can call their parents whenever and wherever they want to. With the help of cellular phone, families tie together closer than ever before. For safety issue, a mobile phone as a means to connect users to other people in emergency cases should be mentioned. For example, when a mobile phone subscriber has a car accident, he/she can use his/her mobile phone to call an insurance agent or even the police without having to look for the public phone.

Through marketing actions that increase the frequency of use of the product or appeal to new segments, Motorola will maintain its leading share in a strong competitive market.

Conclusion

As a U.S. firm attempting to persuade the Thai market to buy its products, Motorola realized that having the right segmentation would lead to its success. Before entering the market, Motorola did identify its target markets by studying the existing demographic data. By currently going after the affluent and middle class adult markets, Motorola has gained a strong measure of success with their audience selections. Although the largest percentage of the total population is the lower class, they are unable to buy the product. As a mobile phone is a high-tech, complicated and expensive product, buyers must have a good financial status and a certain level of education and adaptability to realize the product's importance and understand its functions. Therefore, adults in upper and middle class are the product's primary potential buyers.

With the right market segmentation, the reputation of the company, and the quality of the product, Motorola enjoys the leading position obtaining approximately 35% of market shares in the cellular and communications market in Thailand. However, situations change rapidly in the fast-moving business. Motorola should seek new market segments to expand its sales and customer base. Based on the existing demographic data, the teenager group is a viable audience that Motorola should go after. Teenagers represent the largest group of population and have great buying power and sales potential. Like the adult market, only teenagers who are members in the upper and middle class are considered the new target market. Another potential audience for Motorola is the early majority. Among five major adopter categories: innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards, people in the early majority category (34 percent of the market) are the most deliberate of all adopter categories. They are the middle class whose demands for the product are at present weak.

To capture these two new segments, strong and persuasive promotional messages need to be created. For the teen market, Motorola should consider using sensational, emotional, and one-sided messages. Celebrity endorsement is another technique needed to be taken into account. For the early majority market, the issues of safety and family ties should be covered in the message to arouse needs for the product. As mentioned above, the heavy traffic condition in Bangkok makes impossible for parents to spend as much time talking to their children as they have in the past. With the help of cellular phone, families tie together again with no distance barrier. For safety issue, a mobile phone allows users to connect with other people in emergency cases.

This case study gives an international company a way to know how to effectively capture the market in Thailand by taking time to identify the market that will maximize sales and lead to its success.

Table 3

Socio-Economic Status (S.E.S.)

S.E.S.	Bangkok %	Up-Country Urban %	Up-Country Rural %
Lower	54.7	51.0	72.2
Middle	30.7	28.4	10.3
Upper	14.6	20.6	17.5

Source : Deemar Media Index, 1994

Table 4

Education

Level of Education	Nationwide	Bangkok	Up-Country Urban	Up-Country Rural
No formal	9%	7%	6%	10%
Primary	60%	30%	35%	67%
Secondary	15%	20%	18%	14%
Diploma/vocational	11%	27%	28%	7%
Bachelor or higher	5%	16%	13%	2%

Source : Deemar Media Index, 1994

Table 5

Literacy

Language	% of population (age 12+)
Thai	91
English	12
Chinese	1
Thai and English	12
Thai, English & chinese	*
Pop. Base (' 000)	(47,758)

Note. *Less than 0.1%

Source : Deemar Media Index 1994

Table 6

Sex and Age

Sex	Total (' 000)	%	0-9 %	10-19 %	20-29 %	30-39 %	40-49 %	50-59 %	60+ %
Total	59,095	100	20	21	20	15	10	7	7
Male	29,553	50	20	21	20	16	10	7	6
Female	29,542	50	19	21	20	16	10	7	7

Source: : National Economic and Social Development Board 1994 (Projectio
: Ministry of Interior of Thailand, 1994

Table 1

Population by Region

(Unit ' 000)

	Total	%	Urban		Rural	
			Population	%	Population	%
Nationwide	59,095	100	10,721	18	48,374	82
Bangkok	5,584	9	5,584	100	-	-
Central	13,776	23	2,017	15	11,759	85
North	11,590	20	863	7	10,726	93
Northeast	20,542	35	1,248	6	19,295	94
South	7,603	13	1,009	13	6,594	87

Source : Ministry of Interior of Thailand, 1994

Table 2

Household Income

Monthly Householc Income	Nationwide %	Bangkok %	Up-Country Urban %	Up-Country Rural %
Under Bht.* 6,000	60.3	10.2	28.1	72.2
Bht. 6,000-9,999	18.2	18.5	23.0	17.7
Bht. 10,000-19,999	12.9	30.8	28.4	8.3
Bht. 20,000-34,999	5.9	25.8	15.4	1.4
Bht. 35,000 & over	2.7	14.7	5.1	0.4

Note 25 Baht = 1 US Dollar

Source : Deemar Media Index, 1994

Assessing Diversity in Broadcast Syndication

by

Philip M. Napoli
Northwestern University
Dept. of Communication Studies
Harris Hall, Rm. 35
1881 Sheridan Rd.
Evanston, IL 60208
847-491-5839
pmn480@lulu.acns.nwu.edu

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Assessing Diversity in Broadcast Syndication

Abstract

This study assesses diversity in broadcast syndication, an important form of program delivery that has to this point been ignored by diversity researchers. It measures diversity across a number of dimensions, including program type diversity, source diversity, and exposure diversity, using data and program classifications from the 1995 Nielsen Report on Syndicated Programming. The results indicate a moderate amount of diversity in terms of program types, but very high levels of diversity in terms of sources and exposure.

Assessing Diversity in Broadcast Syndication

Diversity has become a fundamental principle underlying evaluations of the performance of mass media systems and the objectives of telecommunications policy making. Certainly, an important measure of the quality of any media system or market is the diversity of offerings available to the audience (Levin, 1971, p. 81). Owen (1978) describes diversity as one of the "paramount goals of broadcast regulation in America" (p. 43). According to McQuail (1992), "diversity has come to acquire the status of an end in itself for mass media--a broad principle to which appeal can be made on behalf of both neglected minorities and of consumer choice, or against monopoly and other restrictions" (p. 142). However, despite its centrality to the assessment of media performance and the formation of media policy, diversity remains an ambiguous concept, as difficult to adequately define as it is to effectively measure (Owen, 1977, 1978; Le Duc, 1982). This paper proposes a multi-dimensional approach to assessing diversity in the electronic media and conducts a preliminary assessment of diversity in broadcast syndication.

Measuring Diversity in the Electronic Media

First, however, it is important to review the diversity assessment literature to date. Assessments of diversity in the electronic media are numerous; however, an examination of this research reveals three major shortcomings: 1) a lack of consistency in the program typologies used, making comparisons across studies difficult; 2) a focus on network prime-time programming, to the neglect of other important forms of program delivery; and 3) a tendency to focus on a single dimension of diversity--diversity of program types--while other fundamental components of diversity have been ignored.

Early diversity research was concerned with the effects of increased numbers of broadcast stations or networks on the diversity of program types available to the audience (Greenberg & Barnett, 1971; Levin, 1971; Long, 1979; Steiner, 1952). This research classified broadcast programming into a small number of categories and computed diversity measures across different market sizes to determine the extent to which market size affected the diversity of available program types.

Later work focused instead on charting trends in the diversity of program types over time (Dominick & Pearce, 1976; Litman, 1979). Dominick and Pearce (1976) measured program diversity by deriving 14 program categories, then summing the percentages in the top three program categories per season and subtracting this total from 100. The diversity measure could thus range from zero (at which point all content is accounted for by only three or fewer categories) to 79 (where content is divided equally into 14 categories). Obviously, a low score would indicate a lesser degree of program type diversity (Dominick & Pearce, 1976, p. 73). The results indicated a relatively steady decrease in program diversity since 1953, with action and drama programs accounting for 81 percent of network prime-time programming by

1974 (Dominick & Pearce, 1974, pp. 76-77).

Litman (1979) used a different measure of program diversity. He computed a Herfindahl-Hirschman index (HHI) of concentration for the years 1974-1979. This index is calculated by summing up the squared shares (of the total number of programs) of each program type (Litman, 1979, p. 408). Unlike the Dominick and Pearce (1976) approach, this method takes into account every program type's share of total programming (as opposed to only the top three). Litman (1979) used nine program types, corresponding to those used in the Broadcasting Yearbook (p. 403, 408). During the time period studied, Litman (1979) found a general increase in network program diversity, a phenomenon he attributes to increased industry competition and turbulence during that period (p. 403).

Wakshlag and Adams (1985) assessed prime-time network program diversity over a longer period than either Litman (1979) or Dominick and Pearce (1976). They found a sharp decline in diversity that coincided with the introduction of the Prime Time Access Rule in 1971 (contradictory to the Rule's intentions). Their analysis utilized 37 program categories, derived from the Nielsen classification system and from Brooks and Marsh's Complete Directory to Prime Time Network TV Shows: 1946-Present (Wakshlag & Adams, 1985, p. 25). Long (1979) computed diversity using 20 program categories separated into mass appeal and specialized appeal categories, finding that program diversity suffered after the death of the DuMont network in the 1950s (p.

343). More recently, Lin (1995) found a relatively constant level of program type diversity during the 1980s, a period in which increased competition from alternative program sources (i.e. cable, satellite, and home video) was predicted to lead to increased program type diversity. Lin (1995) computed her diversity measures using the HHI and 25 program type categories (p. 20).

Other recent diversity assessments have expanded the scope beyond prime-time network programming. Wildman and Lee (1989) computed diversity indices for the broadcast networks, superstations, basic cable, and pay cable channels. They computed two diversity measures of the program types offered by each channel. The first was a Herfindahl-Hirschman Index identical to the one used by Litman (1979). The second factored in the amount of time in the total programming schedule occupied by the various program types. The syndicated program typography used by A.C. Nielsen was employed for this analysis (Wildman & Lee, 1989, pp. 22-25). Wildman and Lee (1989) found--as expected--a negative relationship between program repetition and content diversity. De Jong & Bates (1991) focused exclusively on cable television, computing measures of both "absolute" and "relative" diversity. "Absolute" diversity was defined as the number of different channel types carried by a cable system divided by the total number of channel types for the cable industry. "Relative" diversity was defined as the number of different channel types divided by the channel capacity of the

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system (De Jong & Bates, 1991, pp. 161-162). Representative channel types included sports, music/videos, movies emphasis, and shopping (De Jong & Bates, 1991, p. 165). The results indicated that not only has there been an improvement in channel diversity over time, but that this improvement has progressed at an increasing rate. Litman, et al. (1994) measured program type diversity for a week of programming in 1992 for the four main television networks, basic cable channels, premium cable channels, and PBS, finding a moderate degree of program type concentration across all four categories of programmers (pp. 150-151). This analysis utilized 15 program type categories that were designed from the categories used in previous research (Litman, et al., 1994, pp. 134-135). Finally, Grant (1994) also cast a wide net, looking at diversity across 41 U.S. broadcast and cable networks. His study went beyond the primarily descriptive intent of previous diversity assessments, testing for statistical relationships between program type diversity and other media factors, such as ratings and the number of channels in each channel type category (broadcast networks, basic cable, superstations, and pay cable). Grant (1994) utilized 25 program type categories based upon those used in Litman's (1979) study. His results indicated that increasing the number of channels of a particular type did not lead to increased diversity of program types; nor was there a significant correlation between audience ratings and program type diversity (Grant, 1994, pp. 59-62).

These diversity assessments support McQuail's (1992) claim that the "standard most often applied in assessing diversity of media content . . . has been that of quantity and range--the more options and the more different they are, the more diversity for the consumer" (p. 149). However, these assessments of diversity are not without their problems. First, as this review has shown, there has been no consistent application of the same program type classification system across studies. Researchers have used different classification schemes, while A.C. Nielsen has changed program categories frequently over the years (Dominick & Pearce, 1976, p. 71). Consequently, comparing results across studies is extremely problematic.

Second, as Owen (1978) points out, program type classifications do not provide a very sensitive measure of diversity: "First, not all public affairs shows are alike, just as all westerns are not alike. There may be as much 'diversity' _within_ traditional program types as _among_ program types" (p. 44). Thus, equating diversity in program _types_ with true program diversity would be a severe oversimplification. This flaw is highlighted to a certain extent in the research on program type classifications. One of the primary objectives of program type classifications is to group programs which, because of the content and cast members, are apt to attract similar audiences (Frank, Becknell, & Clokey, 1971, p. 204). However, the extent to which viewing behavior can be explained by program type categories has been called into question. While some researchers have found program classifications to be an effective predictor of viewing behavior (Frank, et al., 1971; Kirsch & Banks, 1962; Lehmann, 1971; Levin, 1980, ch. 3), others have reached the opposite conclusion (Ehrenberg, 1968; Rao, 1975). Still others have found that program classifications as a predictor of viewer preferences change over time (Frank, et al., 1971; Wells, 1969; Youn, 1994), indicating shifts in audience program preferences and raising a validity issue for longitudinal studies using program type classifications. In sum, program type classifications *may* not be a very effective tool for tapping at diversity in programming.

Also, these measures neglect sources of programming as an integral component of diversity. As Owen (1978) argues:

> Diversity of programming has nothing to do with freedom of expression. Diversity in either the *sources* of programming or the *control* of access to the media does have a clear relationship to freedom, but this is not what is commonly meant by program diversity. (p. 46)

Owen's point relates to the ownership diversity criterion frequently addressed by media critics (Bagdikian, 1992) and policy makers. Kleiman (1991) points out numerous instances in which the FCC and the courts have used ownership diversity as a proxy for other diversity components, adopting a "reasonable expectation" that content diversity would stem from ownership diversity (p. 413). In *Metro Broadcasting Inc. v. Federal Communications Commission,* the Supreme Court ruled that minority licensing preferences promote broadcast content diversity

(Kleiman, 1991, p. 418).

Finally, none of the broadcasting diversity research discussed above addresses the question of exposure diversity, a concept which is as fundamental as content diversity to the achievement of the marketplace ideal that guides media regulation (Napoli, 1996). Exposure diversity refers to audience exposure to a diversity of program sources or types. That is, while a media market may have a large number of competitors, the overwhelming majority of the audience may be concentrated within a few firms. Jacklin (1978) provides one of the few instances in which this issue is addressed within the diversity literature:

> A diversity of voices is a necessary but not sufficient condition of a diversity of communications. In a typical city, there are six TV stations and 25 radio stations, but four or five stations control 90 percent of all communications on issues. . . . By monopolizing audiences they monopolize the potential for communications on issues as well. (p. 88)

McQuail (1992) elaborates on this concept, distinguishing diversity of content "as sent" from diversity of content "as received," the latter of which "identifies a different universe of content than that sent--what the audience actually selects" (p. 157). While a media market may provide a wide array of program types, audiences may gravitate to a select few types while ignoring the rest. As Webster and Phalen (1994) argue:

> diversity of supply does not guarantee what might be called

> "diversity of consumption." Quite the contrary, as the menu of content becomes increasingly diverse, each individual is in a position to consume an ever narrower diet of programming. . . . If increasing diversity of content means that each individual is actually exposed to less diversity of expression, it's hard to see how such a result facilitates the marketplace of ideas. (p. 35)

Or, schedulers may systematically place certain program types in inaccessible time slots. Thus, while measures of exposure diversity "may tell us more about the audience than about media performance, audience selections are, to some extent, an outcome of editorial decision-making about relative prominence, placement, scheduling, publicity, etc." (McQuail, 1992, p. 157). In any case, there has been little research attention to this conceptualization of diversity of content "as received" (McQuail, 1992, pp. 158-15); however, without assessing exposure diversity it is impossible to know the extent to which content or source diversity actually translates into audiences receiving diverse programming.

In sum, diversity is a complex, multi-dimensional concept that is realistically subject to a wide range of variables (see McQuail, 1992, for an excellent discussion), including factors such as variation in performers, quality (Greenberg & Barnett, 1971), demographic representation (Kubey, et al., 1995), and ideological position (Entman & Wildman, 1992). Yet, despite their potential weakness and their one-dimensional conceptualization of diversity, program type classifications have, for practical purposes, remained the standard mode of diversity assessment in broadcasting among both academic researchers and the FCC (Litman, 1979, p. 402). Of course, measuring all of the important components of diversity may be impossible; however, it is certainly possible to go beyond program types and assess some of the other dimensions of diversity discussed here.

A Focus on Syndication

As this review has shown, the majority of diversity research has focused on prime-time network programming. While recent work has broadened this focus, one important area that remains uninvestigated is broadcast syndication. Syndicated programming accounts for roughly 35% of the national broadcast audience, comprising almost 300 hours of regularly scheduled programming per week (Advertiser Syndicated Television Association, 1995). Revenues have grown from $50 million in 1980 to $1.5 billion in 1993 (Freeman, 1994, p. 19).

Despite this prominent position within the electronic media, syndicated programming and the syndication market in general have received relatively little academic attention. Research on syndication has thus far addressed topics such as market competition (Chan-Olmsted, 1991), the rise of barter syndication (Chan-Olmsted, 1994), the managerial challenges posed by broadcast syndication (Vaccar & Kassaye, 1990), and the relationship between network programming and off-network syndication (Robinson, 1994; Wildman & Robinson, 1995). However, the quantity of research focusing on syndication still lags significantly behind the quantity devoted to network programming (Wildman & Robinson, 1995, p. 27). (For examples of the diversity of research questions investigated in terms of prime-time network programming, and for reviews of the literature in this area, see Atkin & Litman, 1986; and Adams, et al., 1983.) There have to this point been no efforts to assess diversity in broadcast syndication. The need to address this issue is compounded by a number of recent regulatory and structural changes within the broadcasting industry. These changes have the potential to radically affect diversity in the syndication marketplace.

Regulatory and Structural Changes Affecting Syndication

The first of the major changes affecting syndication is the elimination of the Financial Interest and Syndication Rules (FINSYN) by the FCC as of November of 1995. These rules prevented the networks from owning the syndication rights to the prime-time programs they produced. With the elimination of these rules, the networks (with their enormous financial and programming resources) are free to become active participants in the syndication marketplace. The second major change is the elimination of the Prime Time Acces Rule as of September, 1995 (Littleton, 1996, p. 8). This rule, in effect since 1972, blocked off-network programming from the lucrative 6 to 8 p.m. access daypart on network affiliates in the top 50 markets (Freeman, 1994, p. 17). The elimination of this rule gives the largest network affiliates a completely different inventory of syndicated programming to choose from for those hours. Both of these rules were designed with the expressed intention of promoting both network and syndicated diversity, though the extent of their effectiveness is unclear (McGregor, 1984, p. 834).

Third, in addition to the rise of the FOX network, two new fledgling networks (owned by Warner Brothers and Paramount, respectively) have recently made inroads into prime-time programming, forming affiliation agreements with formerly independent stations (Freeman, 1994, p. 17). These stations previously relied on syndicated programming for much of their prime-time schedule, but now utilize network programming instead. Should these networks grow, adding affiliates and scheduling programming beyond prime time, then the number of time slots available to syndicators would further decrease. Finally, the Telecommunications Act of 1996 relaxes station ownership restrictions and substantially deregulates cable television. One can only speculate on how these regulatory changes will ultimately affect syndication. Clearly though, attention must be devoted to syndication now in order to effectively assess both the long- and short-term effects of these various changes within the media industry on the syndication marketplace.

Method

This paper conducts a preliminary multi-dimensional diversity assessment of broadcast syndication, using Nielsen data and

Nielsen program classifications from the November 1995 Report on Syndicated Programming (1995). Computing diversity measures for the broadcast syndication market has some fundamental differences from measuring program diversity of prime-time network programming. First, syndicated program scheduling and availability differ substantially across markets. Unlike network prime-time programming, there is no uniformity of programming across markets when it comes to broadcast syndication. Some programs may be seen in only one or two markets, while other programs may be seen in virtually all markets. In addition, these programs will more than likely be shown at different times in different markets. For these reasons, as well as the fact that the number of stations varies by market, it is best to approach the syndication marketplace in the aggregate, rather than on a market-by-market basis or time slot basis as previous researchers were able to do with prime-time network programming.

Thus, this analysis began by determining the percentage of the total number of syndicated programs accounted for by each program type. The 22 program type groupings provided by A.C. Nielsen in its November 1995 Report on Syndicated Programming (1995) were used for this analysis.[1] Nielsen (1995) defines a syndicated program as: 1) a filmed or taped program available for telecast on a market-by-market basis; 2) telecast in at least five NSI markets on reportable commercial TV stations, and 3) scheduled at the same time and day in at least two of the four weeks of the measurement period (p. A). Many of the 22 program group categories contain additional subcategories; however, these were not used as the total number of potential program categories would have risen to 57. Thus, if a program was classified into one of the program type subcategories, its corresponding group category was recorded. While the use of the Nielsen program typology may be problematic methodologically (see above), Wildman and Lee (1989) justify its use "by the fact that Nielsen's clients in the television and advertising industries appear to find it of some value. If they did not, it would either be altered or dropped from Nielsen's publications" (p. 22). Also, Levin (1980) provides evidence that the Nielsen typology has significant explanatory power in terms of program audience size (pp. 63-69). The Nielsen typology can potentially serve as a common language among diversity researchers (as opposed researchers continually developing their own typologies), allowing for greater comparability of research findings.

From the program totals for each program category the Herfindahl-Hirschman (HHI) index used by Litman (1979), Litman, et al. (1994), and Lin (1995) was computed. As was described above, the HHI is computed by summing the squares of each program type's share of the total number of programs. Thus, the lower the HHI, the lower the concentration of program types. The Justice Department has typically considered HHIs below 1,000 as unconcentrated, HHIs between 1,000 and 1,800 as moderately concentrated, and HHIs over 1,800 to mean high concentration (Chan-Olmsted, 1991, p. 13). Translating these benchmarks into diversity categories, an HHI below 1000 indicates high levels of diversity, an HHI between 1000 and 1800 indicates moderate diversity, and an HHI above 1800 indicates a lack of diversity (Litman, 1979, p. 408).

In order to more thoroughly assess diversity in broadcast syndication, the question of source diversity was also investigated. For this question, the diversity index was computed with program distributor replacing the program type variable. Thus the HHI was computed by summing each program distributor's share of the total number of syndicated programs available. The results provide a sense of the extent to which syndicated program offerings are provided by a diversity of sources.

Finally, this analysis also addressed the issue of exposure diversity, a concept seldom addressed in diversity research. While program and source diversity are indicators of the diversity of program offerings, exposure diversity describes the extent to which audiences are actually consuming a diversity of program types and the degree to which audiences are distributed across a diversity of program sources. For this measure, instead of using shares of total program offerings in relation to sources and program types, shares of broadcast syndication's total ratings points were used. Specifically, the Nielsen Report on Syndicated Programming (1995) provides a national rating for each syndicated program. This number reflects the percentage of television households nation-wide that viewed the program.

Dividing each program type's total national ratings points by the total number of syndicated ratings points results in that program type's share of the syndicated audience. Substituting program distributor totals for program type totals allows us to measure the share of the syndicated audience captured by each distributor. Summing these shares results in diversity HHIs in terms of both exposure to diverse program types and exposure to diverse program sources. Of course, given that these measures were computed from aggregate Nielsen audience data, as opposed to individual diary data, they provide a reading of "horizontal exposure diversity"--exposure diversity across the aggregate audience--as opposed to "vertical exposure diversity," which would be the degree to which individual audience members were consuming a diversity of programming (see Entman & Wildman, 1992, p. 11 for a discussion of horizontal and vertical diversity).

Results

As of November, 1995, there were 329 programs available through broadcast syndication and 102 different program distributors participating in the market. The results of the diversity measures calculated are summarized in Table 1.

Insert Table 1 Here

Looking first at program type diversity, we see that the top three program types are children's programming, situation comedies (each of which accounts for 19% of syndicated programming), and documentary (which includes news), which accounts for 10% of syndicated programming. The HHI, which accounts for each program type's share of total programming, is 1161, a level indicative of moderate concentration according to Justice Department standards.

In terms of source diversity, the broadcast syndication market fares much better. The top three program sources (Buena Vista, Warner, and Turner) account for only 17% of the total number of programs available. The HHI for this category is a very low 278, which indicates a very diverse programming market in terms of sources of programming.

The exposure diversity measures describe the extent to which syndicated program audiences are distributed across a diversity of both program types and program distributors. Looking first at exposure to diverse program types, we see that the top three program types account for 47% of the broadcast syndication audience. The program types with the largest share of the syndicated audience are situation comedies (22%), documentary (13%), and drama (12%). The HHI for this category is 728, indicating a high degree of exposure diversity in terms of program types. There is a comparable degree of diversity in terms of exposure to different program sources. The top three program distributors (in terms of audience shares) account for 37% of the syndicated audience. The top three distributors in this category are King World (16%), Buena Vista (11%) and Paramount (10%). The HHI for this category is 716, which

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indicates a lack of audience concentration within only a few program sources.

Lastly, correlations were calculated between program share and audience share for both program type and distributor. The Pearson correlation between each program type's share of the total number of syndicated programs and its share of the total audience is .76 ($p < .01$). The correlation between distributor share of total programming and audience share is .80 ($p < .01$). These results indicate that in terms of both program types and distributors, there is a relatively strong relationship between share of total programming and share of the total audience. Thus, the total audience for a given program type is to some degree a function of that program type's availability.

Discussion

The results presented here indicate that the broadcast syndication market generally fares quite well across a number of diversity dimensions. While in terms of program types there is moderate concentration (HHI of 1161), there is a greater diversity in terms of exposure to program types (HHI of 728). This would appear to contradict McQuail's (1992) assertion that "content as received will show a narrower range (thus less diversity) than content as sent" (p. 157). In the case of broadcast syndication, audience preferences appear quite diffuse, more so than the diffusion of program types. Given the lack of serious concentration in terms of program types and the relatively strong correlation (.76, $p < .01$) between program share and audience share, it seems safe to conclude that the broadcast syndication market is effectively serving a variety of audience program preferences.

We can compare the program diversity HHI computed here with similar measures computed by Wildman and Lee (1989), since they used an identical methodology and the same program classification system. As Table 2 demonstrates, broadcast syndication offers a comparable degree (slightly better, in fact) of program type diversity to network television. Broadcast syndication also performs slightly better than the superstations and substantially better than basic cable, pay cable and pay-per-view channels. These results indicate that broadcast syndication (along with network television) provides the greatest degree of program type diversity of all the major modes of program delivery.

Insert Table 2 Here

In terms of program sources, the broadcast syndication market is exceptionally diverse, indicated by the HHI of 278. Exposure diversity is also high in this regard (HHI of 716). These results indicate that the major distributors of syndicated programs do not dominate the supply of programming, nor do they dominate an overwhelming proportion of the audience. The strong correlation (.80, $p < .01$) between program share and audience share for distributors indicates that distributors of syndicated programming (regardless of size) are, to a certain degree, equivalent in their ability to attract audiences to a particular program. Conversely, audiences do not appear to demonstrate overwhelming preferences for programming provided by particular sources.

In sum, this analysis of broadcast syndication lends credence to the market model of the provision of media diversity outlined by McQuail (1992). Under this model, "The media system should reflect the demands of would-be receivers" while also maximizing the benefits of would-be senders (McQuail, 1992, p. 153). The broadcast syndication market exhibits strong diversity across both its structural characteristics (ownership and content) and its reception characteristics (exposure), thereby meeting the normative diversity objective in terms of both content "as sent" and content "as received." This would appear to be an instance of the market encouraging the provision of a wide variety of program types from a wide variety of sources--none of which are able to appeal to a disproportionate amount of the available audience.

Conclusion

At this point in time, broadcast syndication demonstrates an impressive degree of diversity across a number of dimensions. It remains to be seen whether the major impending changes to the broadcasting landscape will have an appreciable effect on diversity in broadcast syndication. As a large and integral part of the broadcasting marketplace, syndication merits continued attention as the telecommunications environment continues to evolve. In addition, future research should continue to monitor the various dimensions of diversity outlined here, as it is important that diversity in the electronic media not be addressed from an overly narrow conception of diversity. Variations of the diversity assessment methodology employed here for the study of broadcast syndication could easily be adapted to studies of network programming, cable programming, children's programming, or any other media programming market.

Future research should also investigate the possibility of relationships between the program type diversity measures for various programming modes. For instance, has program type diversity in syndication fluctuated similarly to prime-time diversity, or is there an inverse relationship? Is there a relationship between diverstiy in cable programming and diversity in prime-time network programming? Longitudinal studies could determine whether there are significant inter-relationships in terms of program type diversity shifts for the various program sources.

The approach outlined here could also be useful in investigating the question of whether source diversity truly does lead to content diversity. This relationship has been an underlying assumption for a number of important policy decisions (see, for example, Metro Broadcasting Inc. v. Federal Communications Commission, 1990; see also Kleiman, 1991). Tracking the relationship between source diversity and program type diversity over time could shed some light on the validity of this assumption.

Also meriting further investigation is the concept of exposure diversity and its relationship to other diversity factors. What sort of relationship exists between content diversity and exposure diversity? The approach outlined here provides a measure of "horizontal exposure diversity"--diversity of exposure across the aggregate audience. "Vertical exposure diversity"--diversity of exposure within individual audience members--can also be measured, though individual-level diary data would be necessary. Research using such individual-level data has provided evidence that increased content diversity can actually lead to decreased exposure diversity (Gunter, 1985; Webster, 1986; Youn, 1994), while aggregate level data analyses have--somewhat surprisingly--reached similar conclusions (Wober, 1989). If this is indeed the case, then the obsession with increasing the diversity of available content has certainly been misguided. A longitudinal study utilizing the program type and exposure diversity measures employed here could provide useful insights into this possibility.

In sum, diversity research needs to move beyond simply tracking trends in content diversity over time. This section has outlined a number of important relationships that need to be investigated and has reinforced the need to maintain a multi-faceted approach to measuring the concept of diversity.

Table 1: Broadcast Syndication Diversity Measures.

Diversity Dimension	HHI
Program Type	1161
Source	278
Exposure (Program Type)	728
Exposure (Source)	716

Top Three Shares

	Share of Total # of Programs
Program Type	
Situation Comedies	19%
Children's Programming	19%
Documentary	10%
Total	48%
Source	
Buena Vista	6%
Warner	6%
Turner	5%
Total	17%

	Share of Total Ratings Points
Program Type	
Situation Comedies	22%
Documentary	13%
Drama	12%
Total	47%
Source	
King World	16%
Buena Vista	11%
Paramount	10%
Total	37%

Table 2: Program Diversity Measures Across Service Types.

Service	Program Diversity (HHI)
Broadcast Networks	1203*
Superstations	1568*
Basic Cable	4502*
Pay Cable	6840*
Pay-Per-View	10000*
Broadcast Syndication	1161

* Derived from Wildman and Lee (1989).

Endnotes

1. The 22 program type group categories with their corresponding abbreviations are as follows: Adventure (A); Audience Participation (AP); Adventure-True-To-Life (AT); Children (CH); Situation Comedy (CS); Comedy Variety (CV); Devotional (D); Documentary (which includes news) (DO); General Drama (DR); Evening Animation (EA); How to Do (HU); Interview (I); Mini Series (M); Mystery & Suspense (MS); Variety Musical (MV); Quiz-Give Away (QG); Quiz Panel (QP); Sports Events & Commentary (S); Science Fiction (SF); Talks & Educational (T); General Variety (VG); and Western Drama (W) (A.C. Nielsen, 1995, p. S-2).

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Crime and Agenda-Setting, 1988-1995:

The Relationships Among the President, the Press, and the Public

Patrick M. Jablonski, Ph. D.
The University of Central Florida
School of Communication
P.O. Box 161344
Orlando, Florida 32816-1344
(407) 823-2840 (Office)
(407) 823-6360 (Fax)
pjablons@pegasus.cc.ucf.edu

William. J. Gonzenbach, Ph. D.
The University of Alabama
The College of Communication
P.O. Box 870172
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35487
(205) 348-7668 (Office)
(205) 348-9257 (Fax)

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Running head: Crime and Agenda-Setting, 1988-1995

Abstract

Prior research has established that the media disproportionately emphasize violent crimes, resulting in greater public crime fears. Despite a decrease in the rate of violent crime, the percentage of the public identifying crime as the nation's most important problem literally exploded during the second half of 1993. This study examines the relationship between the mass media, the president, public opinion regarding the crime issue in the United States from 1988 to 1995. Cross-lagged correlations are used in an attempt to assess the agenda relationships among the press, the president, and the public. Most important problem survey results from multiple organizations are aggregated into a time series of 96 monthly time points to measure the public agenda. The media agenda is developed from an analysis of the monthly frequency of crime stories in The New York Times. The presidential agenda is developed from a similar analysis of the Public Papers of the Presidents. Results indicate that public opinion about crime influences the press agenda. The press agenda, in turn, influences the presidential crime agenda. The president appears to also influence the public agenda, but at a 5-month lag.

Crime and Agenda-Setting, 1988-1995:

The Relationships Among the President, the Press, and the Public

Despite a decrease in the rate of violent crime (Whitman, 1996), the percentage of the public identifying crime as the nation's most important problem literally exploded during the second half of 1993. Indeed, by the end of 1993, crime had supplanted all other problems as it became the public's number one concern (Morin, 1994). Brown and Pasternak (1994, p. A1) note that the ascendance of crime has little basis in statistical reality: "Fear flows with its own infernal logic. The upsurge is not driven by a sudden rising tide of crime; the rate of violent episodes, although much higher than 3 decades ago, is down slightly from peaks in the 1980s. The difference is in the perception of crime's pattern."

Policy-makers at federal and state levels were likewise concerned with crime by the end of 1993. Crime legislation, such as the Brady Gun Control Law, the Omnibus Crime Act, and a variety of "three strikes and you're out" laws are all evidence of the importance of the crime issue. The increased concern about the crime issue, starting in 1993, was not limited to the public and political elites, however. Media coverage of crime has similarly expanded since the early 1990s (Whitman, 1996).

The rise of crime on the American agenda provides a unique opportunity to investigate the relationship between public opinion, the press, and the president. The purpose of this study is to determine what forces influence, and were influenced by, crime-related public opinion from 1988 to the end of 1995. Specifically, this study investigates the agenda relationships among the president, the press, and the public regarding crime.

Crime: The Media and Public Opinion

A number of studies have found that the amount of crime news is driven by forces other than the level of crime. In an early study, Davis (1952) found that crime rates do not correlate with newspaper coverage, while public opinion more closely mirrors the press, a finding later supported by Sheley and Ashkins' (1981) investigation of crime trends. Further, there are indications that such disproportionate coverage can lead to an exaggerated fear of crime (Payne & Payne, 1970). Hindelang (1974) noted that media coverage patterns result in the perception that violent crimes are the most common, a conclusion echoed by Erskine (1974a, 1974b, 1974c, 1974d). A number of studies echo this claim. Fishman (1978) explicated how news reporters created a "crime wave" by highlighting a few crimes against the elderly in New York City. News coverage of crime can be fairly distorted. Jones (1976) reported that murders received 90 times the coverage of other major offenses in St. Louis newspapers. Similarly, Graber (1979) found that the most violent crimes are exaggerated at the expense of other offenses. Moreover, crime news coverage was found to be driven by forces other than social significance. The most obvious reason for covering violent crime is consumer demand or fascination (Katz, 1987). Ultimately, the power of media coverage was underlined by Einsiedel, Salomone, and Schneider's (1984) finding that the fear of victimization is better predicted by media exposure than by actual experience with crime.

Agenda-Setting

The paradox of perceptions differing from reality is not a new phenomenon. The dramatic rise of crime on the national agenda was greatly influenced by a complex mix of events, factors, and various societal components. Agenda-setting research may give an indication of how crime, a virtual non-issue in early 1993, had become a major issue by late 1993. The increased media coverage of crime, coupled with presidential emphasis, public opinion and the public's fear of crime have all shaped the life of the crime issue. As Smith (1987) argues, the media and other societal forces mutually influence each other over time, defining the scope of major issues.

Agenda-setting traces its foundation back to Walter Lippmann (1922), who was among the first to argue that the issues which concern the public are in large part determined by the media. Cohen (1963) subsequently argued that the media, while not successful in telling us what to think, are extremely successful in telling us what to think about. Agenda-setting research has flourished in the years since the publication of McCombs and Shaw's (1972) seminal study. According to the agenda-setting hypothesis, the amount of public concern for an issue is in part a function of media emphasis of that issue. Over 200 agenda-setting articles have been identified in the social science literature since 1972 (for a review, see Rogers, Dearing, and Bregman, 1993).

Prior research suggests that public concern about a particular issue does not operate in a vacuum on the political landscape. Instead, public opinion may have a hand in driving presidential attention, which in turn affects media emphasis. The inverse of these processes may be operating as well. Indeed, all three of these societal components interact at some level regarding major issues. Gonzenbach (1992) found that, when framed in the context of the drug issue, the agendas of the press, the president, and the public reciprocally affect each other. The rise and fall of issues on the American political landscape demonstrates the complexity of the processes involved in the study of public opinion.

Given that one major component involved in determining the nature and strength of the relationship between the press and public opinion is time, cross-sectional "snapshots" of this process are suspect in their accuracy. Erbring, Goldenberg, and Miller (1980), argue that time series analysis in agenda-setting is necessary in order to develop more realistic and accurate studies by avoiding the narrow focus of cross-sectional designs. There are other advantages to a time series approach to agenda-setting: First, media effects on public opinion are cumulative. By analyzing data over time, researchers might be able to measure this phenomenon. Second, since it is impossible to control for confounding variables in the typical agenda-setting study, multiple measures over time give researchers more evidence to evaluate changes in one of the agendas being studied.

Kepplinger, Donsbach, Brosius, and Staab (1989) suggested that time series analysis can assist in investigating the ageless question of if the press drives or follows public opinion. Indeed, Watt and van den Berg (1978) provide the theoretical underpinnings of such an approach to the relationship between public opinion and the mass media. Kepplinger et al. (1989) rely on Watt & van den Berg (1978) in identifying and extending four theories about this relationship:

> 1) The mass media create public opinion, hence, the correlation between media content at one time will be more strongly correlated with public opinion at a later time than any other correlation.
>
> 2) The mass media mirror public opinion, meaning that the correlation between media and public agendas at the same time should be stronger than any other correlation.
>
> 3) Public opinion creates media coverage, implying that the correlation between public opinion at one time will be more strongly correlated with public opinion at a later time than any other correlation.
>
> 4) There is no significant correlation between media coverage and public opinion.

Gonzenbach (1992) applied these four theoretical approaches to the relationships among the agendas of the president, the public, and the media. Meanwhile, Rogers, Dearing, and Chang (1991) utilized time series models to investigate the inter-relationships of real-world cues, the science agenda, the media agenda, the polling agenda, and the policy agenda for the public issue of AIDS. The present study draws upon this tradition by investigating the relationship between the agendas of the press, the president, public opinion, and real-world cues over time within the context of the crime issue.

Public Opinion and the Mass Media

There are a number of indications that public opinion and the mass media mutually influence each other. Erbring et al. (1980) found that the effects of the public agenda on the media agenda gradually develop over a long time. However, the media agenda impacts public opinion more quickly. Although Behr and Iyengar's (1985) experimental manipulation indicated that public concern regarding unemployment and energy did not drive media coverage, public attention may have modestly increased coverage of inflation. Similarly, Rogers and Dearing (1987) found that there is a "two-way mutually dependent relationship between the public agenda and the media agenda" (p. 571). Kepplinger et al. (1989) also demonstrate that press coverage about German Chancellor Helmut Kohl preceded public opinion. Most important, this study found that media coverage also followed public opinion, albeit with a differing set of opinions. Gonzenbach (1992) also found a relationship of mutual influence between the press and the public for the drug issue.

The President and Public Opinion

Public opinion is not solely affected by the mass media. Shaw and McCombs (1989) argue that political elites, interest groups and major organizations also affect the public agenda. Behr and Iyengar (1985) note that the president is the key American political figure and receives the plurality of media and public attention. As with the interaction of the press and the public, the president likewise affects and is affected by the press and public agendas. Converse (1987) claims that public opinion affects the president and policy-making. The opposite effect can be true as well. The president can alter the public agenda by advocating certain legislative or moral positions in oral, written, and symbolic communications (Chapel, 1976). Moreover, the president's prominence allows the president an opportunity to regularly communicate a specific agenda (Behr & Iyengar, 1985) which may have a significant effect on public opinion (Gilbert, 1981).

The President and the Mass Media

In addition to the public, the president similarly interacts with the press. Press coverage is very often affected by the president's explicated agenda. Emerson (1987) has argued that the Iran Contra scandal presented a direct embarrassment to Reagan's war on terrorism. Consequently, press coverage of terrorism abated with decreased presidential emphasis on the issue (Jablonski, 1992). Hence, the media can play a significant role in driving policy making and policy makers can similarly affect the media.

Agenda-building studies, moreover, indicate that media coverage is largely determined by what issues political elites and the public deem important (Protess & McCombs, 1991). A bidirectional relationship may exist between the agendas of the media and the president (Denton & Hahn, 1986). Put simply, the media can influence the presidential agenda while the president can influence the media agenda. The media provide the president with exposure to the public and vice versa (Graber, 1982; Edwards & Wayne, 1985). In addition, the media follow every move a president makes, adding to the considerable amount of news coverage devoted to the White House (Orman, 1990). This also enlarges the typical audience for any one presidential message (Denton & Hahn, 1986). Furthermore, a president may transmit a list of priorities to the public and Congress at the start of an administration through the mass media (Light, 1991). This is an important function, especially if one feels that the role of the president is to shape national attitudes into a coherent policy (Powell, 1986).

The president, as the chief political figure in America, also provides news stories. The president may therefore play a major role in influencing the news media agenda (Gilberg et al., 1980; Lang & Lang, 1981; Weaver & Elliott, 1985; Turk, 1986; Robinson, 1990). Behr and Iyengar (1985) note that the president is the key American political figure and receives the plurality of media and public attention. Levels of press coverage are very often affected by the president's explicated agenda. Presidents can create news by holding press conferences and photo opportunities, among other ceremonies (Ansolabehere, Behr, & Iyengar, 1993). Presidents use pseudo-events and other communication opportunities to infuse the news with "self-serving commercials" (Denton & Hahn, 1986, p. 275). Indeed, Behr and Iyengar (1985) found that a single presidential speech on a given issue can result in as many as ten stories. These researchers note that when Reagan addressed the economy, lead stories about the economy increased in the media.

The relationship between political elites and the media has also been studied in lower levels of public office. Cook et al. (1983) and Protess et al. (1987) indicate that Chicago area policy elites had modest degrees of attitude change after being exposed to investigative reports about problems within that city. Pritchard (1986) reports that prosecutorial decisions are significantly predicted by the amount of media attention devoted to a certain case. Finally, Schmid (1992) demonstrates that the president (and executive policy) can be directly affected by mass media coverage of terrorism. Hence, the media can play a significant role in driving policymaking while policymakers can similarly affect the media.

The agenda-building process can work in the other direction as well. Cobb and Elder (1972) posit that the mass media play a huge role in elevating issues to the presidential agenda. Therefore, the mass media may directly affect the presidential agenda. Weaver's (1990) attempt to define the direction of influence in the press-politician relationship concludes that the linkage's characteristics are largely case-specific. In some situations, the press have the upper hand, while in other situations, the politicians drive the agenda.

The relationships described so far do not exist independent of each other. Indeed, as prior research suggests, the press, the president, and the public may influence each other's agendas regarding important issues (Gonzenbach, 1992; Rogers, Dearing, and Chang, 1991). The triangulation of the press, the president, and public opinion over time can provide the researcher with a more robust macro-level picture of agenda-setting. As Kosicki (1993) concludes, "Agenda-setting is one small part of a larger process of understanding the very complex interrelationships among media organizations, public opinion, and public policy-making" (p. 117).

Research Questions

This work draws most specifically upon the time series investigations of agenda-setting by Gonzenbach (1992), Rogers et al. (1991) and Kepplinger et al. (1989). This study seeks to address three basic questions about the roles played by the press, the president, and public opinion with regard to the crime issue:

1) Do the mass media influence public opinion or does public opinion influence the media's agenda ?

2) Does the president influence public opinion, or does public opinion influence the president's agenda?

3) Does the president's agenda influence the media's agenda or does the media agenda influence the president's agenda?

Method

Data

The study comprises three agenda measures for each month from January 1988 until December 1995. The public opinion measure is the American public's monthly opinion of crime as the nation's most important problem. The media agenda consists of articles in The New York Times related to violent crime. The presidential public relations agenda is operationalized as the monthly frequency of public statements about crime by the president.

Public Opinion

The study combines multiple, similarly worded "most important problem" survey questions from 14 different public opinion survey organizations in order to measure the public agenda (for a breakdown, see Table 1). The percentage of crime being mentioned as the most important problem was tracked from January 1988 until December 1995. 115 monthly polls are used to determine public opinion about the crime issue for 61 of the 96 months of the study, while 35 months are estimated by interpolation. Each survey was conducted via telephone, was based on a national sample of adults, and utilized an open-ended question format.

Of the 115 surveys, 19 accepted multiple responses, while 96 did not. The results of the 19 multiple response surveys were scaled by dividing the percentage response by the total percent of the survey. For example, the August 1992 Gallup poll indicates that 7 percent of those surveyed identified crime as the nation's most important problem. All of the responses in this particular survey totaled 182 percent. Therefore, the adjustment was calculated by dividing 182 into 7 (the unadjusted survey percentage). In this example, the adjusted percentage is 3.8 percent.

The sample sizes for the 115 surveys range from 509 to 5,791 with a mean of 1324.6 and a standard deviation of 670.9. The mean for the mid-point of when the individual polls were conducted during each month was 14.5 with a standard deviation of 8.6 days. Certain months contained more than one most important problem survey. The mean of the multiple surveys was taken for this type of month.

Table 1

Use of Most Important Problem Polls by Organization

Organization	Number of Polls Used
CBS/New York Times	23
Gallup	21
ABC/Washington Post	14
Los Angeles Times	13
CBS	8
CNN/USA Today	7
Princeton Survey Research Associates	7
ABC	6
The Wirthlin Group	6
Washington Post	5
Associated Press/Media General	2
Institute for Communication Research	1
New York Times	1
Public Opinion Strategies	1
Total	115

The New York Times

This study utilizes a content analysis of the media crime agenda in The New York Times. The New York Times was used because it is the elite newspaper in the United States and is fairly robust to the proximity effects of major issues. The unit of analysis was individual articles or stories about violent crime. The monthly frequency of crime stories and articles was used primarily because this method was more efficient in terms of time and money than calculating column inches or minutes of coverage. The use of frequency counts has been found to be a fairly reliable measure of media content, and is comparable to the tabulation of column inches (Stone and McCombs, 1981).

The New York Times file within the Lexis/Nexis data service was used. The Lexis/Nexis search string was, "Crime and national desk or editorial desk and homicide or murder or violent or violence or rape or robbery and not news summary and date aft December 1987 and date bef 1996." Only articles in the national news and editorial sections of The New York Times were recorded. Articles from local sections (the Connecticut desk, the Metro desk, etc.) were omitted from the study. In addition, to avoid duplication of articles, news summary pieces were excluded from the analysis since they merely represent articles extant in that day's edition. Each story was analyzed to ascertain the article's relationship to the crime issue in the United States.

The President

Similarly, the presidential agenda is measured via the public relations efforts of the presidents. The Public Papers of the Presidents was utilized to determine the monthly frequency of mentions of the crime issue by the sitting president. This resource is also included in the Lexis/Nexis service. The search string utilized was, "Crime and date aft December 1987." The retrieved documents were analyzed for their relevance to the research topic. Finally, the use of frequency counts was decided upon for many of the same reasons as in the investigation of the media agenda.

Analysis

This study employs Autoregressive Integrated Moving Averages (ARIMA) time series analysis as popularized by Box and Jenkins (1976). In the present study, ARIMA modeling is used to identify each of the univariate time series. Cross-lagged correlations were then calculated for all permutations of the three variables: press-public opinion; president-public opinion; president-press (McCleary and Hay, 1980). 6-month lags were calculated in each direction for the cross-lagged correlations. While Winter and Eyal (1981) determined that a 4-6 week span is optimal, Stone and McCombs (1981) found that the process of adapting media changes in the public agenda may take between 2 and 6 months. Shoemaker et al. (1989) reported that the optimal effects were several weeks and 3 months preceding a poll. Meanwhile, Kepplinger et al. (1989) found optimal effects 3 months prior to the poll. Finally, Gonzenbach (1992) reported that the relationship between the press and public opinion is "a two-way street" (p. 141). In other words, support was found for the immediate agenda-setting effects of the media as reported by Shoemaker et al. (1989) and Erbring et al., (1980) in addition to the long-term (6-month) correlations found by Kepplinger et al. (1989) and Brosius and Kepplinger (1990). Hence, the media affect public opinion and vice-versa, though to different degrees and perhaps at different points in time. ARIMA time series is an appropriate method of analyzing the four univariate time series in this study since there are over 50 monthly observations (Montgomery, Johnson & Gardiner, 1990). In addition, this method is an accurate time series analytical tool since it calculates the first- and second-order autoregression within each series. In other words, for a given series, the error terms or residuals at different points in time should not be correlated. When this occurs, the estimated regression model fits the data very well, since the model underestimates the true variability of the residuals. The result is a deceptively inaccurate model, which in turn leads to inaccurate testing of hypotheses. The Durbin-Watson d-statistic can be used to test for first-order autocorrelation (Freund & Littell, 1991). However, the time series being studied might be a second-order autoregressive process (SPSS, 1988). ARIMA analysis is used to determine and model the errors which may make a time-series largely unpredictable. In effect, ARIMA increases the accuracy of the forecast model, resulting in more accurate hypotheses testing.

While much of the criticism of ARIMA modeling is appropriate for forecasting procedures, such as the large number of time points and the difficulty in refitting the model with the acquisition of new data, this type of analysis is well-suited to studies which use historical data and examine only a few series (Montgomery, Johnson, & Gardiner, 1990). There are, however, drawbacks to this approach. Since this study draws bivariate comparisons between the series, the simultaneous effects of third variables cannot be determined, much less controlled (Fan, 1988).

Results

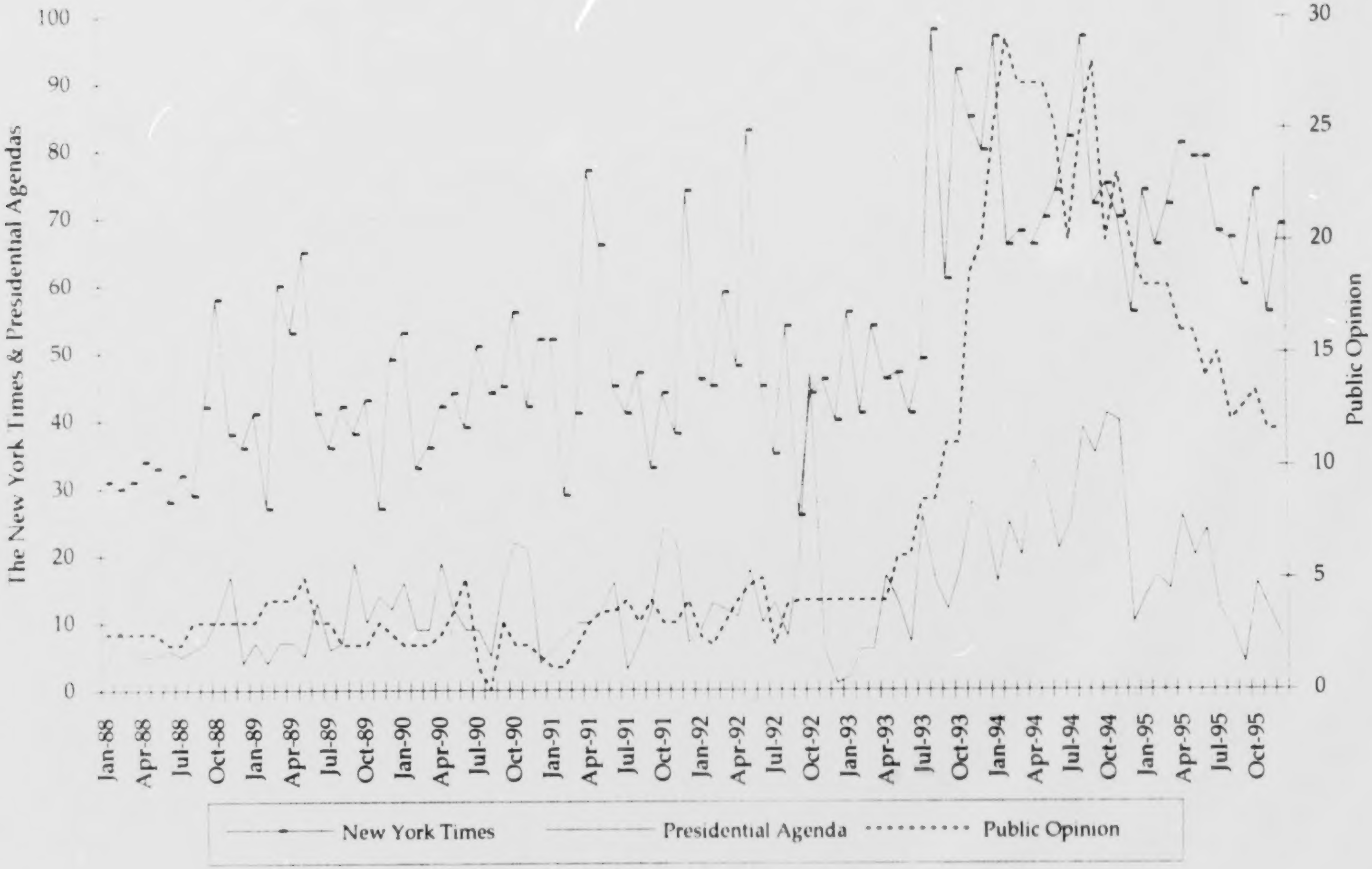
Descriptive Analysis

The data indicate that crime stays relatively stable in prominence across measure until July, 1993. Press coverage, presidential attention, and public opinion all show signs of increase at this time. Notably, the increases are dramatic for the public and press agendas, while the presidential agenda measure rises more gradually.

Public Opinion

Crime was not viewed as a major problem from 1988 until mid-1993 as evidenced by the responses to "most important problem" survey questions. Crime fears peak at around 5 percent in the first half of each year studied until 1993. The effect of certain incidents, such as the Los Angeles. riots in May, 1992 may explain this phenomenon (see Figure 1). Notably, crime does not reach the 6 percent level until May, 1993. During this time, other issues were certainly important, such as health care, gays in the military, the budget, and the situations in Bosnia and Somalia. However, crime concerns expand rapidly in October, peaking in December

Figure 1. The Crime-Related Agendas of the Press, the President, & the Public, 1988-1995



with 20 percent. Several press accounts attribute the October-November-December expansion to several high-profile crimes, such as the kidnapping and murder of Polly Klaas in California and the mass murder on the Long Island Railway in December, 1993.

While concern for crime remained higher than usual through 1995, that concern appears to be a decreasing trend since the peak months during 1993 and 1994. Other issues have attenuated the supremacy of crime on the nation's important problem agenda. Specifically, concern regarding the federal budget deficit, the economy, and unemployment increase throughout 1995. Granted, crime is still identified as the most important problem by a plurality of respondents, but other issues appear to have gained ground by the end of 1995.

The New York Times

Crime articles in The New York Times resemble an increasing linear trend, overall, between 1988 and 1995. Moreover, monthly frequencies of articles about crime before 1993 have intermittent peaks. Several of the cycles seen in the public opinion measure seem to exist for The New York Times' crime coverage. However, press coverage of crime reaches unprecedented levels starting in August of 1993. Several events occur at this time: the Rodney King and Reginald Denny beating trials in Los Angeles and the murders of foreign tourists in Florida. While press coverage abates in September, it expands once again in the last 3 months of 1993, the result of still more events. Press coverage remains at the same basic level during 1994, and, arguably, for much of 1995. However, the high degrees of coverage between August 1993 and August 1994 do not occur during 1995. This may have some relationship to the similar decrease in concern for crime in the public agenda at this time. In addition, 1994 may have had more prominent crime stories than 1995. There were a number of events in 1994 which were covered by the media, including the Susan Smith infant drownings in South Carolina, a number of homicides committed by pre-teens in Chicago, and the Nicole Simpson-Ronald Goldman murder investigation.

Presidential Emphasis

Presidential attention to crime, as measured by the *Public Papers of the Presidents*, is interesting in that mentions of crime increase in October of each election year analyzed by the study (1988, 1990, 1992, 1994). The highest frequency of presidential crime emphasis occurs in October 1992 while the lowest total occurs 2 months later[1]. In the latter half of 1993, however, presidential attention increases in August, but falls in September. Several issues, such as health care and the budget battle, served to draw attention away from crime. Crime seemed to be back on the presidential public relations agenda in October and November, 1994, partly a result of the debate and subsequent mid-November vote on the Brady gun control bill. However, presidential mentions of crime decrease throughout 1995. Again, this trend appears to mirror what is found with the other two agendas: Attention to the crime issue peaks in 1993, but decreases by the end of 1995.

ARIMA Modeling

Univariate Series Analysis

The nature of the three time series studied was in part explicated with the ARIMA analysis. Table 2 includes the ARIMA model terms for each series, along with the estimates of how well each model fits the corresponding data. The public opinion time series is an integrated series, needing only to be differenced (0,1,0). The model for *The New York Times* indicated a moderate first-order autoregressive process and a differenced, seasonal moving average process: (1,0,0) (0,1,1). The seasonality of this series was 12 months. Although traditional Box-Jenkins ARIMA analysis would dictate dropping the seasonal moving average component to the

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[1] This may be due to the fact that George Bush was a lame duck president in December, 1992 and had reduced his public appearances and statements during the transition to the Clinton Administration.

New York Times series (in light of its .719 probability), the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) and the Schwartz Bayesian Criterion (SBC) indicated that the model fit the data very well. The SPSS Trends manual notes that a researcher may choose to ignore a probability estimate if the AIC and the SBC indicate the model can be accepted (SPSS, 1988). Finally, the ARIMA model for the presidential time series indicated a strong first order autoregressive process: (1,0,0).

Table 2

ARIMA Analysis of Univariate Series

Series	Model	Coefficients	t-ratio	p
Public Opinion	(0,1,0)			
New York Times	(1,0,0) (0,1,1) 12	$\phi1 = .39$	4.38	.000
		$\theta12 = .99$	0.36	.719
President	(1,0,0)	$\phi1 = .54$	6.18	.000

ARIMA Cross-Correlation Analysis

Once the ARIMA model for each univariate series is determined, it is necessary to examine the bivariate relationships among the agendas of the press, the public, and the president. The bivariate analysis takes each modeled series and examines the cross-lagged correlations for each possible paired combination (Gonzenbach, 1992; Mark, 1979; Vandaele, 1983). Table 3 depicts the lagged correlations for each of the three possible relationships in this study. With regard to crime, public opinion preceded coverage in The New York Times, with significant correlations at 2 and 5 months. The cross-correlation analysis did not indicate the existence of a reversal of this process. Hence, public opinion about crime plays a

Table 3

Cross-lagged Correlations of Public Opinion, Presidential Agenda and New York Times Coverage

Public Opinion

	Precedes						*Synchronous*						*Follows*
NY Times	.00	.18*	-.16	.11	.19*	-.02	.16	.06	-.01	.16	-.01	-.06	-.03
President	-.02	-.10	.05	-.10	-.14	.11	.09	-.02	.17	-.10	-.07	.27*	.09
Lag	-6	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	+6

President

	Precedes						*Synchronous*						*Follows*
NY Times	.09	-.08	.07	.10	-.05	.14	.01	-.10	.22*	.09	.08	.13	-.06
Lag	-6	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	+6

* p<.05

significant role in affecting the crime agenda of The New York Times, but not vice-versa. Perhaps the press reacts to the news desires of the reader by tailoring coverage to the market. On the other hand, the press may be ferreting out newsworthy stories independent of a marketing concern. Overall, however, the results suggest that the relationship between the press and the public appears to be relatively one-sided as far as the crime issue is concerned.

Public opinion and the presidential public relations agenda regarding the crime issue were significantly correlated at lag +5 only. This may very well be a spurious effect since it comes, quite literally, from out of the blue: No hint at such an effect at surrounding lags exists. An important note should be made, however. Gonzenbach's (1992) similar examination of the drug issue reported a nearly identical result in both degree and time. Hence, the president may indeed be affected by the public or the press after a period of time, but the dynamics behind such a relationship, if it indeed exists, defy easy explanation. The presidential and public agendas regarding crime do not appear to drive each other, as far as monthly time-lags are concerned. Perhaps altering the lag periods to smaller units would uncover the nature of the relationship. However, this is impossible with current public opinion measures.

The relationship between the press and the president was significant at lag +2. This indicates that the president tends to follow the agenda of the press. The result for lag +2 may be used as evidence of the president following the press at a later date. This result appears to be a good example of agenda-building. The president seems to react to the media agenda regarding crime. No other correlations are significant.

Discussion

The cross-correlation analysis presented here implies an intriguing agenda-building/agenda-setting process for the crime issue in the United States between 1988 and 1995. This study indicates that the press does follow public opinion. A traditional agenda-setting effect was not detected in this study. The lack of effects from The New York Times on crime-related public agenda may be explainable due to the fact that fear of crime is one of the more obtrusive issues in contemporary society. The public does not necessarily need to rely on news to be concerned with crime. Direct experience with crime and non-news media programming may be enough to spur concern with crime.

The effect of public opinion on the media does not end in a vacuum, however. This study presents evidence that the press also serves an agenda-building function by driving the importance of crime on the presidential agenda. Indeed, the president appears to follow The New York Times crime agenda at 2-month intervals. These two results imply an intriguing relationship, with the public's concern about crime spurring media coverage, which in turn drives the presidential agenda (Figure 2). This study fails to isolate what drives public opinion about crime, however. Nevertheless, a number of sources cite increased crime coverage on television news. Indeed, a recent study by the Center for Media and Public Affairs indicates that crime coverage on television news has quadrupled in the 1990s, despite an overall decrease in the actual crime rate (Whitman, 1996). Perhaps public attention to the crime issue is driven by the media after all, just not The New York Times. While the relationship depicted in Figure 2 is tantalizing, the cross-correlation results fail to indicate that the public agenda is significantly correlated with the presidential agenda over time, except for the (questionable) result at lag +5.

Figure 2

Setting the Crime Agenda Between 1988 and 1995

Public Opinion -----> The New York Times -----> Presidential Agenda

The three research questions posed by this study called for an investigation into each possible relationship among the crime agendas of the president, the press, and the public, specifically: 1) do the mass media influence public opinion or does public opinion influence the media agenda?; 2) does the president influence public opinion, or does public opinion influence the president's agenda?; 3) does the president's agenda influence the media agenda or does the media agenda influence the president's agenda? This investigation indicates that public opinion about crime appears to drive The New York Times' crime coverage. The present analysis also fails to find a significant relationship between the agendas of the public and the president regarding the crime issue. Finally, it appears that the presidential crime agenda is driven by the press. Notably, this study fails to find evidence of a "two-way street" regarding the crime issues for any of the relationships among the three agendas.

Future research should address a number of the limitations encountered by this study. Obviously, the nature of correlational data preclude making causal statements about the agenda relationships reported here. The effect of confounding variables is relatively unknown. Indeed, there is good reason to suspect that other forms of mass communication may have an effect on public opinion. This study cannot control for those effects. In addition, the bivariate cross-correlation analysis similarly cannot control for the combined effects of agendas. In other words, the combined effects of the presidential and press agendas may result in a different picture of influence on the public agenda.

Future research should also utilize real world measures of the crime problem not to add to the long line of findings demonstrating the discrepancy between crime news and crime reality, but instead to factor in the degree to which the measures used in this study are "event driven." The concern of the public about crime may be a series of reactions to high-profile crimes, such as the Polly Klaas case, the O.J.

Simpson murder trial, the Susan Smith case, and the Menendez brothers trial. In addition, the public may take their cues from a direct experience with crime, fear of crime, or with depictions of crime in the entertainment media.

The effect of television news coverage of crime should also be investigated using similar time series modeling procedures utilized in this study. The inclusion of a television news measure in such a study might indicate that the public indeed takes their cues from the electronic media, while the print media may be influenced by public attitudes and perceptions about the crime issue. It seems logical that the effects of crime coverage in the newspaper would not be as strong as similar coverage depicted on television. Notably, O'Keefe and Reid-Nash (1987) identified television news as having a greater fear effect than newspaper coverage. Perhaps a study employing a television news measure would show a stronger agenda-setting effect regarding the crime issue in addition to the apparent agenda-building effect detected here.

The increase in public concern about crime in the last half of 1993 came at a time when most measures of the problem indicated that crime was actually decreasing. While public concern for crime has receded from the high levels of 1993 and 1994, the percentages of respondents identifying crime as the most important problem is still higher than in the early 1990s. Crime has not fallen off of the public agenda, although it does not appear to be as important by the end of 1995 as it was in 1993. This study may be more important for what it says about newspaper coverage of the crime issue than for what it implies about public opinion processes. Perhaps crime coverage in elite newspapers is geared more to responding to the social issue of crime, rather than to the individual instances of crime themselves. In this view, increased public concern for crime may receive more media scrutiny, in turn driving the presidential agenda. Fear of crime does indeed defy logical, objective measures of the crime problem. Answering the question of what drives that fear remains a poignant issue for future research.

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NEWSPAPER OWNERSHIP AND PUBLISHER AUTONOMY: A RANKING OF THE CHAINS

Martha N. Matthews
School of Communications
Box 353740
University of Washington
Seattle, WA 98195

Paper presented to the Media Management and Economics Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, August 1996, Anaheim, CA.

ABSTRACT

NEWSPAPER OWNERSHIP AND PUBLISHER AUTONOMY: A RANKING OF THE CHAINS

Martha N. Matthews
School of Communications
Box 353740
University of Washington
Seattle, WA 98195

A survey of newspaper publishers employed by 13 chains revealed that the chains vary in the level of autonomy they allow their publishers. Hearst publishers were found to have a relatively high level of autonomy, while Donrey Media and Gannett publishers were found to have a relatively low level of autonomy. Autonomy was also found to correlate positively with circulation size; the larger the circulation of the newspaper, the greater the level of publisher autonomy.

High autonomy levels correlated positively with a strong public service/quality orientation. Contrary to expectations, however, low autonomy levels did not correlate positively with a high profit orientation.

The results of this analysis suggest that the level of external control imposed on a newspaper by the parent company -- the autonomy level -- may be a reasonable predictor of whether or not the newspaper will operate with a public service/quality orientation.

NEWSPAPER CHAINS AND PUBLISHER AUTONOMY:

A RANKING OF THE CHAINS

One of the most consistent criticisms of chain ownership of newspapers is that it leads to standardized managerial systems created and implemented by parent companies, leaving little room for managerial autonomy at the local level. This position assumes that it is difficult for managers at the local level, namely, the publishers of the newspapers, to run their newspapers in a responsive way to their environment. But is this criticism accurate? Do all of the chains control their newspapers in a standardized manner, or do they vary in the level of control they impose on their publishers? This study attempts to provide a ranking of the largest U.S. newspaper chains on the issue of publisher autonomy, and examine how autonomy is related to the public service and profit-building goals of newspaper companies.

Review of the literature

Many studies have investigated the differences between chain-owned newspapers and independently owned newspapers.[1]

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[1] See, for example, Roya Akhavan-Majid, Anita Rife and Sheila Gopinath, "Chain Ownership and Editorial Independence: A Case Study of Gannett Newspapers," *Journalism Quarterly* 68 (Spring/Summer 1991): 59-66; Ben H. Bagdikian, The Media Monopoly, 4th ed. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993); David C. Coulson, "Impact of Ownership on Newspaper Quality," *Journalism Quarterly* 71 (Summer 1994):403-410, David P. Demers, "Effect of Corporate Structure on Autonomy of Top Editors at U.S. Dailies,"

However, the wide variety in types and sizes of chains have made these comparisions difficult. The research conducted to date appears to suggest that the individual chains vary significantly from one another on a variety of issues, and that chain versus independent ownership alone is not a very meaningful distinction. For example, Wackman, Gillmor, Gaziano and Dennis found that some chains are very homogeneous in their endorsement patterns for presidential candidates, while other chains have no real pattern.[2] Lacy and Fico created a "quality index" in order to rank 15 newspaper groups, which, when circulation was not considered, ranked the Times Mirror, Newhouse and Hearst chains at the top of the list in editorial quality, and the Lee, Ottaway and Stauffer chains at the bottom. Lacy and Fico concluded that "whether a newspaper will have high or low quality seems to depend on the policy of the owners and the financial resources available to an individual newspaper."[3]

Journalism Quarterly 70 (Autumn 1993):499-508; Byron. St. Dizier, "Editorial Page Editors and Endorsements: Chain-Owned vs. Independent Newspapers," *Newspaper Research Journal* 8 (Fall 1986):63-68; and Ralph R. Thrift, "How Chain Ownership Affects Editorial Vigor of Newspapers," *Journalism Quarterly* 54 (Summer 1977):327-331.

[2] Daniel B. Wackman, Donald M. Gillmor, Cecilie Gaziano and Everette E. Dennis, "Chain Newspaper Autonomy as Reflected in Presidential Campaign Endorsements," *Journalism Quarterly* 52 (Autumn 1975):411-420.

[3] Stephen Lacy and Frederick Fico, "Newspaper Quality & Ownership: Rating the Groups," *Newspaper Research Journal* 11 (Spring 1990):42-56.

Public versus private ownership of the chains is another distinction that has yielded some interesting contrasts. Unlike private ownership, under public ownership, a newspaper chain's financial records are made public, and this information is subject to external analysis by financial analysts and investors. This additional layer of financial scrutiny may have an impact on how those newspapers are managed. There is some support for the notion that newspapers owned by publicly-owned chains are managed differently than newspapers owned by privately-owned chains. For example, one study found that publishers employed by privately held newspaper chains were more likely to be similar in their managerial style to publishers of independently-owned, non-chain newspapers than they were to publishers of newspapers owned by publicly-owned chains.[4] In addition, Blankenburg and Ozanich found that publicly-owned chains put more emphasis on profits than privately-owned chains, and that publicly-owned companies with a high degree of inside control (generally by the descendants of an early owner) are more likely to behave like privately-owned companies.[5]

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[4] Philip Meyer, *Editors, Publishers, and Newspaper Ethics* (Washington, D.C.: American Society of Newspaper Editors, 1983): 21.

[5] William B. Blankenburg and Gary W. Ozanich, "The Effects of Public Ownership on the Financial Performance of Newspaper Companies," *Journalism Quarterly* 70 (Spring 1993):68-75.

There is no evidence that newspapers owned by publicly-owned companies place less emphasis on quality than newspapers owned by privately-owned companies, however. Meyer and Wearden found no difference between publishers of publicly- and privately-owned newspapers on their rankings of the importance of product quality, editorial quality and managerial quality.[6] Similarly, Lacy and Fico found no difference in quality among publicly-owned and privately-owned newspaper chains.

Organizational structure and autonomy

Most chains are set up to have one central headquarters for the parent company, and individual newspapers operating independently at various locations. Because the newspapers are not directly observable by the parent company on a day-to-day business, one efficient means of controlling the individual properties is by standardizing the managerial process. According to Mintzberg, when organizations adopt a divisional form of operation, with one central headquarters, and many satellite operations, parent organizations often rely on "performance control systems" as a means of regulating their subsidiaries. In such systems, the parent company specifies several desired results (for example, advertising sales will grow by 10 percent in a given year), and then allows the subsidiaries to manage independently, as long as those performance goals are met.[7] This type of organizational structure is a relatively new system of operation for the newspaper industry, considering that as recently as 1970, two-thirds of all daily newspapers were independently owned, while today, only 25 percent of all daily newspapers are independently owned.[8]

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[6] Philip Meyer and Stanley T. Wearden, "The Effects of Public Ownership on Newspaper Companies: A Preliminary Inquiry," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 48 (Fall 1984):564-577.

Performance control systems in the newspaper industry may also take the shape of newspaper publishers being given the freedom to run their newspapers in accordance with their own discretion as long as profit standards set by the parent company are achieved and general corporate policies are followed. As McManus has stated, newspaper publishers "are responsible to parent corporation managers and serve at their pleasure. Local executives' autonomy varies with the parent corporation's management philosophy and often is greatest when the subsidiary is most profitable."[9]

According to Bagdikian, newspaper chains do not tend to be involved in the day-to-day decision-making of their daily newspapers. Rather, they control their newspapers by implementing policies for handling common management decisions.[10] For example, a chain might have a specific policy on when and how new equipment can be purchased, what percentage of the newspaper should be devoted to news, specific procedures for hiring and firing new employees, and so on. Thus, chains that want to tightly control their newspapers may do so by establishing rigid procedures for common management decisions.

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[7] Henry Mintzberg, Mintzberg on Management: Inside Our Strange World of Organizations (New York: The Free Press, 1989), 156.

[8] John C. Busterna, "Trends in Daily Newspaper Ownership," *Journalism Quarterly* 65 (Winter 1988):831-838, and "Facts About Newspapers," Newspaper Association of America (1992).

[9] John McManus, "A Market-Based Model of News Production," Communication Theory 5:4 (November 1995): 301-338.

Many critics of chain ownership are concerned that outside ownership may lessen the autonomy of publishers and editors employed by the chains, which may ultimately erode the quality of newspapers nationwide. Ziter has argued that newsroom workers who are given variety and autonomy in their jobs experience greater job satisfaction than those with more narrowly defined tasks and little power to make meaningful decisions.[11] Similarly, Demers found that among newspaper editors, autonomy is a strong predictor of job satisfaction, while Polansky and Hughes found a correlation between innovation and perceived autonomy among newspaper managers.[12]

More than two decades ago, Strong observed that when evaluating a newspaper chain, it is important to consider

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[10] Bagdikian, p. 85.

[11] Cary B. Ziter, "The Autonomous Work Group," *Newspaper Research Journal* 3 (May 1980):46-50.

[12] Sharon H. Polansky and Douglas W.W. Hughes, "Managerial Innovations in Newspaper Organizations," *Newspaper Research Journal* 8 (Autumn 1986):1-12.

"whether or not a successful chain is trying to run newspapers or build a financial empire, and whether its primary allegiance is to its readers or to its current and prospective stockholders.[13] Smith has argued that a key difference among the newspaper chains is the relative importance they give these two goals.[14]

What distinguishes the chains from one another on these points? While the reasons are not often quantified, some chains have better reputations for quality than others.[15] For example, Knight-Ridder is often cited as having a high commitment to journalistic quality, while Thomson Newspapers is frequently criticized for having little interest in the editorial product of its newspapers. In the early 1970s, Bishop noted that the sale of a newspaper to the Knight group (now Knight-Ridder) generally meant that the paper would experience an increase in quality. However, Bishop also claimed that "some chain owners are strictly businessmen who happened to get into communications."[16] On the other hand, the Canadian-based Thomson chain has a reputation for cutting staff and shrinking the newshole to increase profits after taking ownership of a newspaper.[17] The Newhouse chain, which has had a reputation for producing mediocre newspapers and large profits, has recently been credited with "dramatically improving their content."[18] While all of these chains are large, highly profitable groups, they differ in their commitments to the goals identified by Smith: running newspapers and building empires.[19] Lavine and Wackman have suggested that the goal of increasing or maintaining profits should be lower in priority to a newspaper than knowing and serving the market, producing a quality product, and serving the needs of employees.[20]

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[13] W.A. Strong, "Newspaper 'Chain Gangs': Changing Times, Changing Styles," Newspaper Production, 51.

[14] Carol Smith, "Running Newspapers or Building Empires: Analysis of Gannett's Ideology," *Newspaper Research Journal* 9 (Winter 1988):37-48.

[15] See, for example, Ben H. Bagdikian, "Newspaper Mergers--The Final Phase," Columbia Journalism Review, (March/April 1977) pp. 17-22; and Jonathan Kwitny, "The High Cost of High Profits," Washington Journalism Review," (June 1990), pp. 19-29.

[16] Robert L. Bishop, "The Rush to Chain Ownership," Columbia Journalism Review, November/December 1972, pp. 10-19.

But what enables individual managers of newspapers (publishers) to focus an adequate amount of resources and attention on the public service/quality side of newspaper management under a chain ownership scenario? This study asserts that autonomy is a crucial factor when it comes to establishing and implementing the public service, rather than profit-building, goals of a newspaper company.

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[17] Kay Lazar, "Provincial Profits," News Inc., (March 1990), pp. 20-25.

[18] Linda Fibich, "A New Era at Newhouse," *American Journalism Review*, (November 1994), pp. 20-27.

[19] Smith, "Running Newspapers," 45.

[20] John M. Lavine and Daniel B. Wackman, Managing Media Organizations (New York: Longman, 1988):380-381.

Hypotheses

Building on the position that autonomy is closely intertwined with the public service and profit-building goals of newspaper companies, the following hypotheses were proposed:

H1: Publisher autonomy levels at the newspaper chains will not be consistent; some chains will allow their publishers a high level of autonomy, while other chains will allow their publishers a significantly lower level of autonomy.

H2: High autonomy levels in newspaper chains will be positively correlated with a public service/quality orientation.

H3: Low autonomy levels in newspaper chains will be positively correlated with a profit-building/revenue orientation.

Method

To test the hypotheses, data were collected from a mail survey of newspaper publishers employed by 14 U.S. newspaper chains. The survey was mailed in February 1996. The goal of the sample selection was to create a list of newspapers in which the publishers were the highest ranking officers of newspapers owned by out-of-town parent companies, thus under the scrutiny of external ownership and managed from a distance. Newspapers located in the same city as the home office of the parent company were excluded from the sample, as were newspapers that were part of a joint operating agreement or where the group had less than a 50 percent interest in the newspaper. Because previous research has found that autonomy is positively associated with circulation size, a minimum circulation of 12,000 was established in order to skew the sample toward the larger newspapers owned by the chains.[21] By skewing the sample selection toward the larger newspapers owned by each group, it was hoped that the newspapers with the most autonomy would be included, therefore, any differences between the chains would be observed based on the autonomy levels of the most autonomous newspapers in the chain.

For newspaper chains that owned more than 25 newspapers, a random sample of the complete list was selected in order to reduce the number of newspapers included in the mailing sample. The final sample for the survey consisted of 184 newspapers (see Table 1).

The survey itself was four pages in length, and consisted of a variety of questions that measured business goals of the individual newspaper chains, as well as a list of hypothetical managerial actions the publishers were asked to indicate whether or not they personally had the authority to carry out without first seeking corporate approval. The survey also contained additional questions designed to measure the respondents' work history, education, chain affiliation, and other demographic questions (see appendix for a copy of the survey).

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[21] For example, in his study of editor autonomy in corporate-owned newspapers, Demers found that autonomy increases as the size of an organization increases. (Demers, "Effect of Corporate Structure," 505.)

Findings

Out of 184 surveys mailed, 105 were returned, yielding a response rate of fifty-seven percent. Response rates for the individual chains are listed in Table 1. Because only one survey was received from a Tribune Co. newspaper, Tribune Co. was eliminated from the study for analysis by chain.

Table 1
Response Rate by Chain

Chain	# Mailed	# Received	Response Rate
Cox	9	5	56%
Donrey Media	15	9	60%
Freedom	19	14	74%
Gannett	20	8	40%
Hearst	7	2	29%
Knight-Ridder	22	16	73%
McClatchy	9	7	78%
Media News	10	5	50%
NY Times	17	8	47%
Newhouse	21	5	24%
Scripps Howard	6	3	50%
Thomson	20	9	45%
Times Mirror	6	5	83%
Tribune Co.	3	1	33%
No chain affiliation indicated	--	8	--
Total	184	105	57%

Autonomy quotients were computed for each of the chains by averaging the number of hypothetical functions the respondents indicated they had the authority to carry out without first seeking corporate approval. These actions covered a wide breadth of activities, and were designed to measure the scope of a publisher's autonomy. The greater the number of actions a publisher had the authority to carry out without first seeking corporate approval, the greater his or her autonomy quotient. Those actions included the following:

- Hire an additional executive-level employee
- Fire an executive-level employee
- Increase the size of the news-editorial staff
- Increase the size of the advertising staff
- Purchase new computers for one department
- Purchase new office furniture for one department
- Attend a week-long management seminar out-of-town
- Subscribe to an additional wire service
- Add or delete sections to the newspaper
- Commission a readership survey
- Make a donation of $1,000 to a local charity
- Open an out-of-town news and/or advertising bureau

The average autonomy quotient computed for the respondents was 8.9, with a standard deviation of 3.1. While autonomy quotients for the 13 chains investigated in this analysis varied from a high of 12 to a low of 4.7, the majority of the autonomy quotients were within one standard deviation from the mean. Notable exceptions to this were Hearst, which had an autonomy quotient of 12, one standard deviation above the mean, and Donrey Media and the Gannett Co., which had autonomy quotients more than one standard deviation below the mean. Caution should be exercised in examining the Hearst score, however, because there were only two respondents from this chain.

The results of this ranking indicate that while many chains appear to have similar autonomy levels (within one standard deviation of the mean), there are chains that differ significantly from this pattern and allow their publishers significantly less autonomy than is the norm. Thus, the first hypothesis is cautiously supported.

It should be noted that a correlation analysis of the autonomy quotients and circulation size of the newspapers revealed a positive correlation between the size of the newspaper a publisher oversees, and the amount of autonomy he or she is allowed (r=.33, p=.005). In general, the higher the circulation, the higher the level of publisher autonomy. It is also worth noting, as Table 2 shows, that the newspaper companies with the highest autonomy quotients (Hearst and Times Mirror) also had the highest average circulation of the respondents.

Table 2
Ranking of the Chains by Autonomy Level

Chain	Autonomy Quotient	z-score	Average Circ. of Responding Newspapers
Hearst	12.0*	.94	335,000
Times Mirror	11.4	.76	249,200
Freedom	11.2	.70	59,309
Scripps Howard	11.0	.63	141,333
Newhouse	10.0	.32	115,400
Media News	10.0	.32	85,100
McClatchy	9.9	.27	87,625
Cox	9.8	.26	104,200
Knight-Ridder	8.9	-.01	86,593
Thomson	8.6	-.10	23,277
NY Times	6.6	-.73	54,000
Gannett	5.8*	-1.01	63,373
Donrey Media	4.7*	-1.31	27,666

mean=8.9, std. deviation=3.1

*significantly different from the mean, p<.01

Public service and profit orientation

To test the second and third hypotheses, the respondents' rankings of the listing of typical newspaper company goals was subjected to factor analysis. The items were analyzed using principal components analysis with varimax rotation. As expected, the goals clustered into two factor categories: public-service/quality goals, and profit-building goals. The factor loadings generated by the analysis were as follows:

Public service/quality	**Factor loading**
Recruiting the best editorial staff	.85
Publishing newspapers of the highest quality	.83
Serving the community	.74
Improving employee relations	.73
Developing a newspaper that reflects readers' interests	.72
Promoting women and minorities to executive-level positions	.59
Profit/revenue-building	
Providing income for the stockholders or owners	.71
Developing new sources of revenue	.67
Maximizing profits	.63
Increasing advertising revenue	.57

The remaining goals, developing new products using new technology, buying additional newspapers, winning journalism prizes, and preparing formal, written plans to guide the paper in the future, did not load strongly on either of the two major factors.

Two new composite variables were then computed by averaging the respondents' rankings of the public service/quality goals and their rankings of the profit-building/revenue goals. A correlation analysis was conducted to test the relationship between autonomy and a public service/quality orientation and a profit-building/revenue orientation.

Conventional wisdom suggests that public service/quality goals and profit-building goals are inversely related, that one is achieved at the expense of the other. The results of this analysis did not support this position. There was no significant correlation between these two variables.

However, when autonomy was introduced into the analysis, a significant interaction was revealed. Autonomy was found to correlate positively with a public service/quality orientation (r=.28, p=.005) and negatively with a profit-building/revenue orientation, although not at a significant level (r=-.17, p=.09). Thus, the second hypothesis was supported, while the third hypothesis was not.

These findings suggest that the greater the autonomy allowed a newspaper publisher by his or her parent company, the more likely the chain, and consequently the individual newspaper, is to adopt a public service/quality orientation.

A low level of autonomy, on the other hand, is not necessarily associated with a high profit-building/revenue orientation.

Conclusions

When it comes to running newspapers, some chains appear to be more willing than others to allow their publishers to operate with a free hand, giving them the latitude to make decisions and implement them autonomously. The reasons for this inclination are not known, but the data are very clear that on the matter of autonomy, there is variation among the chains. While most chains tend to cluster around the mean level of autonomy, there are a few chains, for whatever reason, that operate with a higher degree of external control from the parent company.

What is especially striking about this finding, however, is the fact that autonomy appears to be positively correlated with a public service/quality orientation. In general, when a chain allows a publisher a high level of autonomy, there is a strong likelihood that the chain places a greater emphasis on the public service goals of the newspaper than it does on the profit goals.

These findings do not suggest, however, that a public service orientation is inversely related to a profit orientation. The data in this study do not support that position. Indeed, virtually all newspaper companies have a strong profit interest. However, what the data in this study do suggest, is that the level of external control imposed on a newspaper by the parent company -- the autonomy level -- may be a reasonable predictor of whether or not the newspaper will operate with a public service/quality orientation.

The results of this study, while interesting, should be interpreted cautiously. As is always the case in survey analysis, the information revealed is subject to the credibility of the responses given. Also, a 57 percent response rate, while acceptable, is not spectacular. In addition, comparisons among the chains are difficult to make, as they vary considerably in the number of newspapers owned and circulation size of the newspapers. Still, comparisons among the chains must be made in order to better understand how chain ownership impacts newspaper management. The results from this initial analysis suggest that autonomy is an area that merits additional research and replication, to better ascertain the role it plays in the public service and profit orientation of newspaper companies.

APPENDIX

Survey of Newspaper Publishers

Thank you for participating in this survey. Please answer the questions below to the best of your knowledge and return the survey in the postage-paid envelope provided. Do not sign your name on the survey. If you have any questions about this project, please feel free to write them at the end of the survey or on a separate sheet of paper. Thank you for your cooperation.

1. How many years have you been in the newspaper business? __________

2. Does that include any time on the news-editorial side?

_____ yes _____ no

If yes, how many years did you spend in news-editorial work? _____

3. How many years have you been publisher of this newspaper? _________

4. How many years have you worked for the newspaper group you are presently employed by? __________

5. In which department did you work immediately prior to being named publisher?

_____ news-editorial
_____ advertising
_____ circulation
_____ marketing/research

_____ finance/accounting
_____ administration
_____ was a publisher elsewhere
_____ other (please indicate)
____

6. In which department did you spend the majority of your newspaper career, prior to becoming a publisher?

_____ news-editorial
_____ advertising
_____ circulation
_____ marketing/research

_____ finance/accounting
_____ administration
_____ other (please explain
____

7. Is the newspaper group you work for publicly-owned or privately-owned?

_____ publicly-owned _____ privately-owned

8. The following goals listed are typical of many newspaper companies. Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 7 how important each of these goals is to your parent company by circling the appropriate number. **A score of 1 means the goal is unimportant to your parent company and a score of 7 means it is extremely important to your parent company.**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Buying additional newspapers
1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Developing new sources of revenue
1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Winning journalism prizes
1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Preparing formal, written plans to guide the paper in the future
1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Improving employee relations
1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Publishing newspapers of the highest quality
1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Developing new products using new technology (i.e. Web sites, electronic newspapers, etc.)
1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Increasing advertising revenue
1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Maximizing profits
1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Recruiting the best editorial staff
1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Promoting women and minorities to executive-level positions
1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Serving the community
1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Improving the quality of the editorial content in the newspaper
1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Developing a newspaper that reflects readers' interests
1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Providing income for the stockholders (if publicly owned)
1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Providing income for the owners (if privately owned)

9. Please indicate with a check mark which of the following situations you have the authority, as publisher of your newspaper, to carry out without the approval of your home office:

_____ Hire an additional executive-level employee

_____ Fire an executive-level employee

_____ Increase the size of the news-editorial staff

_____ Increase the size of the advertising staff

_____ Purchase new computers for one department

_____ Purchase new office furniture for one department

_____ Attend a week-long management seminar out-of-town

_____ Subscribe to an additional wire service

_____ Add or delete sections to the newspaper

_____ Commission a readership survey

_____ Make a donation of $1,000 to a local charity

_____ Open an out-of-town news and/or advertising bureau

10. What level of capital expenditures can you make without obtaining corporate approval? _______________

11. Approximately what percentage of your annual salary is tied to your newspaper's profit performance? _______________

12. Please estimate the daily circulation of your newspaper.

____

(Turn over please)

13. Please indicate which newspaper group you are employed by.

_____ Cox Newspapers
_____ Donrey Media Group
_____ Gannett Co.
_____ Hearst Newspapers
_____ Knight-Ridder
_____ McClatchy Newspapers
_____ Media News
_____ New York Times Co.
_____ Newhouse Newspapers
_____ Scripps Howard
_____ Thomson Newspapers
_____ Times Mirror Co.
_____ Tribune Co.
_____ Other (please list) ____________

14. Please indicate your sex.

_____ male _____ female

15. Please indicate your race.

_____ African-American
_____ White
_____ Asian
_____ Hispanic
_____ Other

16. What is your age? _________

17. Please indicate with a check mark which of the following best reflects your educational attainment.

_____ High school graduate
_____ Some college
_____ College graduate
_____ Some graduate work
_____ Graduate degree

18. Do you have an M.B.A. (Master's in Business Administration)?
_____ yes _____ no

19. In your opinion, what is the biggest challenge facing publishers of newspapers owned by large newspaper companies?

____
____
____
____
____

Thank you for participating in this survey.

Running head: MASS MEDIA SPENDING

Beyond the Principle of Relative Constancy:
Determinants of Consumer Mass Media Expenditures in Belgium

Michel Dupagne
School of Communication
University of Miami
P.O. Box 248127
Coral Gables, FL 33124-2030
Phone: (305) 284-3500
Fax: (305) 284-3648
E-mail: dupagnem@umiami.ir.miami.edu

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Mass Communication, Anaheim, CA

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Abstract

This paper goes beyond the principle of relative constancy (PRC) by testing two new models of consumer mass media spending using 1953-1991 Belgian data. Unlike traditional PRC models, which have focused exclusively on the long-term relationship between income and mass media spending, these two models contain additional regressors (price, population, unemployment, and interest rate) in current (Model 1) and lagged (Model 2) form. Time-series regression analyses were performed to determine which variables significantly predict changes in consumer mass media expenditures. Model 1 regressions revealed that price and population were better predictors of mass media expenditures than income, stressing the importance of developing models of consumer mass media spending that go beyond a simple mass media expenditures/income relationship. Model 2 regressions showed that lagged variables played a key role in explaining changes in mass media expenditures, indicating the need for incorporating lags in future mass media spending work.

Beyond the Principle of Relative Constancy:

Determinants of Consumer Mass Media Expenditures in Belgium

Virtually all the existing mass media spending research has zeroed in on the relationship between consumer mass media expenditures and income within the principle of relative constancy (PRC) framework. The PRC assumes that this relationship is proportional--mass media expenditures will grow or decline proportionate to the pace of the general economy--(constancy assumption), but also that expenditure adjustments *within* mass media categories may occur to offset consumer spending on new mass media products and services (functional equivalence assumption) (McCombs, 1972). Empirical support for the PRC has been mixed, however. Whereas some studies have reported that consumer mass media expenditures have remained relatively stable over several decades (Dupagne, 1994; McCombs, 1972; McCombs & Eyal, 1980; Son & McCombs, 1993; Wood & O'Hare, 1991), it was also found that these expenditures rose significantly in the 1970s and 1980s as a result of the introduction of such communication technologies as cable television and the video cassette recorder (VCR) (Dupagne, 1994; Glascock, 1993; McCombs & Son, 1986; Noh, 1994; Son & McCombs, 1993; Wood & O'Hare, 1991).

More problematic is the lack of adequate economic foundation for the PRC. Dupagne (1995) points out that while the assumption of functional equivalence can be phrased in economic terms, there is no such validation for the assumption of constancy. That latter assumption was found to be inconsistent with the Engel law/curve, a traditional microeconomic model of consumer choice. The Engel curve describes how consumers would adjust their level of mass media expenditures in reaction to income changes, depending on the type of good (normal or inferior), but it does not hold that this relationship ought to be constant or proportional.

In light of these ambiguous empirical results and weak theoretical ties, Dupagne (1995) suggests "to pay greater attention to alternative models of consumer mass media expenditures" (p. 23). To date, no researcher has expanded constancy or mass media expenditure models beyond the basic mass media expenditures/income relationship. What is indicative of poor integration of demand studies (under which PRC studies fall) in the existing constancy literature is the absence of any price variables. At a minimum, specification of equations determining significant predictors of mass media expenditures ought to include price and income variables (see Thomas, 1987). Especially in the case of mass media durables, both price and income are likely to affect consumer expenditures. Furthermore, the inclusion of additional regressors might contribute to remove serial correlation, a frequent problem in time-series regression analysis with mass media (or other) expenditures. Serial correlation more than anything else means that the model is misspecified and/or that some relevant variables might be left out. If omitted, important variables will then be relegated to the error term. To the extent that these excluded variables (e.g., price of a good), now part of the error term, might influence the variables contained in the model (e.g., price of another good), a systematic pattern of the residuals might develop, which would indicate a (false) problem of serial correlation (Gujarati, 1988).

As a first step in going beyond the PRC and developing more extensive models of consumer mass media spending, this paper formulates and tests two econometric models to examine the relationships between consumer mass media expenditures and five independent variables (income, price, population, unemployment, and interest rate) in Belgium from 1953 to 1991. It seeks to identify which of these five selected variables in current and lagged form are significant determinants of Belgian consumer mass media expenditures. The lack of support for the PRC in the 1970s and 1980s (Dupagne, 1994; Son & McCombs, 1993; Wood & O'Hare, 1991) suggests that factors other than income are responsible for those non-constant changes in mass media expenditures. If the results of the study find that other variables are better predictors of mass media expenditures than income, then they would indicate that the mass media expenditures/income model ought to be extended to include additional relevant variables. Therefore, this study has major theoretical implications for future media economics research because it contributes to the development of new mass media expenditure models.

Belgium[1] is a unique case study country for this kind of analysis. Not only does it present a rich mass media environment with four electronic media innovations (monochrome TV, color TV, cable TV, and VCR) that have been adopted by Belgian consumers, but its national statistical office, the Institut National de Statistique (INS), provides detailed data about consumer mass media expenditures over time. In fact, whereas the U.S. Department of Commerce breaks down mass media-related expenditure statistics into six categories, the INS reports expenditure data on nine mass media categories (eight if we exclude the aggregate print media category). In addition, very little mass media expenditures research has been conducted outside the United States, and this study offers some of the first empirical glimpses at another Western country's mass media spending determinants.

Overview of the Mass Media Environment in Belgium

Before detailing the methodology of this study, it is important to highlight the major trends of the mass media--print media, broadcast media, new media, and cinema--industries in Belgium between 1953 and 1991 so that the findings can be interpreted in a historical context (see McCombs & Nolan, 1992).

Whereas the number of non-dailies has skyrocketed by almost 800% since 1945, the number of dailies (consisting of all types, not just main daily newspapers) has followed a curvilinear pattern between 1954 and 1990, first rising until the late 1960s (by 40% from 1945 to 1968) and then declining in the last two decades (by 32% from 1969 to 1990). Even in most recent years, the audience of Francophone newspapers, as well as sales and revenues, has continued to decrease (Ringlet, 1989). Reasons accounting for the gradual decline of the French-speaking daily press include ownership concentration, drop in readership, and price of the daily newspaper. In contrast, the Flemish newspaper industry has exhibited the opposite trend. Van der biesen (1989) attributes this stationary evolution during the last decade to the growing emancipation of the Flemish population. This argument assumes that the Flemish public has expressed a keener interest in Flemish issues (e.g., politics, economy, culture) in recent decades than it did in earlier decades.

The law of May 18, 1960 created two public broadcasting organizations, the French-speaking Radiodiffusion-Télévision belge (RTB) and the Flemish-speaking Belgische Radio en Televisie (BRT). Following a 1977 decree, the RTB was renamed the Radio-Télévision belge de la Communauté française (RTBF). This decree transferred most of the authority to regulate French-speaking radio and television from the national government to the Council of the French-speaking Community. Similarly, a 1979 decree enabled the Council of the Flemish Community to oversee most Flemish broadcasting matters. Private radio stations were authorized in September 1981 in Wallonia and in May 1982 in Flanders (De Bens, 1992). In 1987, the Council of the French-speaking Community issued a decree breaking the television monopoly in the French-speaking territory and authorizing RTL-TVi to become the exclusive private TV station in this part of the country. Since then RTL-TVi has been competing fiercely against the two public RTBF stations (RTBF 1 and Télé 21). In 1989, the Vlaamse Televisie Maatschappij (VTM), the only Flemish commercial TV licensee, began broadcasting, and has become a major competitor of the public BRT[2] channels (BRT 1 and TV 2) ever since (see De Bens, 1991).

Monochrome television broadcasting debuted in 1953 and color in 1971. It took 14 years for black and white television to reach 50% of the Belgian households, but only 10 years for color television to do so. While the (cumulative) diffusion of monochrome television follows the traditional S-shaped curve before declining in the 1970s and 1980s, consistent with diffusion and product life cycle theories, the diffusion of color television featured a faster take-off phase.

Another important facet of Belgian broadcasting is the evolution of radio and television license fees (the home radio license fee was abolished in 1988).

The June 18, 1930 law instituted the payment of an annual license fee for the use of a radio receiver (Thoveron, 1971). (The December 24, 1957 law set up a similar fee for TV receivers). So the license fee is a sort of indirect tax imposed upon all owners of radio and television sets. In 1991, the license fee was 4,440 BF (about $130) for a monochrome set, 6,396 BF (about $180) for a color TV, and 6,396 BF for both a monochrome and color TV sets. The fee is paid for the home set, regardless of the number of TV receivers available in the home.

Belgium boasts one of the highest cable penetration rates in the world (for review, see Deltenre, 1989). In less than nine years, the penetration rate of cable television climbed to 50%. In 1991, it was estimated to 88.2%. The penetration rate would be even higher if we use the number of *television* households rather than households as the universe estimate. The rapid growth of cable television in Belgium was primarily motivated by the need to relay national programs in some regions, as well as interest in programming from neighboring countries. In 1991, about 40 cable operators served close to 3,491,000 subscribers and offered an average choice of 20 Belgian and European channels for a government-fixed fee. Yearly subscription fees in Brussels and Wallonia ranged from 2,700 BF (about $75) to 3,500 BF (about $100); moreover, subscribers must pay a separate copyright fee (437 BF or about $12 in 1991) (*Annuaire*, 1993a).

Compared to other countries, such as the United States and the United

Kingdom, the diffusion of the VCR has been relatively sluggish in Belgium until the mid 1980s, presumably because of the high cable penetration and the availability of numerous channels (*Annuaire*, 1991). In 1991, the estimated household VCR penetration was 45.6%. The average price of a VCR declined by 51% from 1982 to 1991; in 1991, the average VCR retailed for 23,771 BF (about $680) (*Annuaire*, 1993b). Other communication technologies have not fared better. In 1990, about 25% of all TV sets in Flanders were equipped with a teletext decoder (Ceefax format) (*Annuaire*, 1993a). Whereas the Flemish teletext system, with an average of 700 pages transmitted daily, has been a success story, the Francophone teletext service originally proposed by the RTBF and using the French Antiope standard was eliminated in 1986, due in part to the unavailability of inexpensive decoders on the market (*Annuaire*, 1991). As to videotex, there were only 9,438 users by December 1991 (*Annuaire*, 1993a). The satellite dish penetration is negligible in Belgium, because ownership/use of TVRO (television-receive-only) dishes was prohibited until 1989.

In most Western countries, movie admissions in absolute terms and per capita have gradually declined since the end of World War II; Belgium is no exception. From 1945 to 1991, the number of admissions and the number of admissions per capita dropped by 89% and 90%, respectively. Except for a few years, the number of movie admissions has always continued to fall since 1945 (see Jaumain & Vandenbulcke, 1986). Furthermore, the number of movie theaters rose by 50% from 1945 to 1957 but then plummeted by 72% from 1957 to 1984 (from 1,585 theaters in 1957 to 445 in 1984). Jaumain and Vandenbulcke (1986) suggest several interrelated explanations for the downfall of cinemagoing: (1) price of admission, which has increased far above the consumer price index since 1960; (2) penetration of monochrome television; (3) introduction of color TV; (4) development of cable TV; and (5) competition from other out-of-home leisure activities (e.g., soccer games) (see also Thoveron, 1971).

Method

Data Collection

Annual data for 1953-1991 consumer mass media expenditures were obtained from the National Accounts division of the Institut National de Statistique (INS) in Brussels. These series were expressed in constant (1980) billions of Belgian francs. The dependent variable was the type of consumer mass media expenditures. There were 11 types of consumer mass media expenditures based on nine original product categories: (1) newspapers and magazines (only available from 1970 to 1991); (2) books (only available from 1970 to 1991); (3) print media; (4) radio, television receivers, and antennas; (5) radio and television license fees; (6) audio and video hardware other than radio/TV sets, including phonographs (1953-1969), stereos, and VCRs; (7) audio and video software, including phonograph records (1953-1969), turntable records, tapes, and compact discs; (8) cable radio and television subscription fees; (9) box-office gross revenues (data for 1953-1959 were obtained from Jaumain and Vandenbulcke [1986]); (10) electronic media (an aggregate of sets, license fees, hardware, software, and cable); and (11) mass media (an aggregate of all categories).

For expressing consumer mass media expenditures in constant Belgian francs, the INS deflated eight of the nine product categories (all above except box-office gross revenues) by their respective price indices, primarily based on the consumer price index (CPI). Because no specific price index for moviegoing expenditures was available, the deflator for computing box-office gross revenues in constant prices was the price index for spectacles (i.e., public performances, which include cinema, theater, circus, concerts, and soccer games).

Five independent variables were selected based on the empirical PRC and economic literature: (1) disposable personal income (DPI) (e.g., McCombs, 1972; Thomas, 1987; Wood & O'Hare, 1991); (2) price (e.g., Cuthbertson, 1980; Grieves, 1983; Weber, 1975); (3) population[3] (e.g., McCombs, 1972; McCombs & Eyal, 1980; McCombs & Son, 1986); (4) unemployment (e.g., Burch & Gordon, 1984; Grieves, 1983; Mankiw, 1985); (5) and (consumer credit) interest rate (e.g., Cuthbertson, 1980; Grieves, 1983; Mankiw, 1985; Weber, 1975).

Data on DPI and price indices were obtained from the National Accounts division of the INS. The deflator for DPI was the GNP price index. Implicit price deflators (i.e., dividing the aggregate series in current prices by the aggregate series in constant prices) were used for the electronic media and mass media categories. It is also standard procedure to use relative prices (i.e., price indices for the 11 categories divided by the CPI) rather than absolute prices in demand analysis (Thomas, 1987).[4] Data on population and unemployment originated from various volumes of the *Annuaire Statistique de la Belgique*, the annual INS statistical yearbook, and from the Ministère de l'Emploi et du Travail (Department of Labor), respectively. Data on consumer credit (nominal) interest rates were gathered from the Banque Nationale de Belgique (National Bank of Belgium), the Belgian equivalent of the U.S. Federal Reserve. For the sake of consistency (all financial series--expenditures, income, prices--were expressed in real terms), interest rates were deflated using the following formula (see Cuthbertson, 1980): real interest rate (ρ_t) = nominal interest rate (r_t) - expected future inflation (Π_t). The expected inflation rate was obtained by subtracting CPI_{t-1} from CPI_t and then dividing the result by CPI_t. For instance, using a nominal interest rate of 0.0321 for 1953, a CPI of 33.2 for 1953, and a CPI of 33.5 for 1954, the real interest rate for 1953 would be: 0.0321 - (33.5 - 33.2)/33.2 = 0.0231 (or 2.31%).

Model Building and Estimation

Two regression models were tested in this study:

Model 1: **Δln mass media expenditures** $_{1953\text{-}1991} = \beta_0 + \beta_1$ **Δln DPI** $+ \beta_2$ **Δln price** $+ \beta_3$ **Δln population** $+ \beta_4$ **Δln unemployment** $+ \beta_5$ **Δ interest rate** $+$ **e**

Model 2: **Δln mass media expenditures** $_{1953\text{-}1991} = \beta_0 + \beta_1$ **Δln mass media expenditures**$_{t-1} + \beta_2$ **Δln DPI** $+ \beta_3$ **Δln DPI**$_{t-1} + \beta_4$ **Δln price** $+ \beta_5$ **Δln price**$_{t-1} + \beta_6$ **Δln population** $+ \beta_7$ **Δln population**$_{t-1} + \beta_8$ **Δln unemployment** $+ \beta_9$ **Δln unemployment**$_{t-1} + \beta_{10}$ **Δ interest rate** $+ \beta_{11}$ **Δ interest rate**$_{t-1} +$ **e**

These models were formulated to determine which of the selected variables best predict changes in consumer mass media expenditures in Belgium from 1953 to 1991. The PRC literature has hypothesized a proportional or constant relationship between income and mass media expenditures (e.g., McCombs, 1972; Wood & O'Hare, 1991). As McCombs (1972) noted, "When they have more money, consumers and advertisers will spend more on mass media. When they have less, they will spend less on mass media" (p. 6). Therefore, we would anticipate that disposable personal income would be a *positive* predictor of consumer mass media expenditures. Second, empirical economic studies have indicated that price, unemployment, and consumer credit interest rate affect variations in consumer expenditures, especially durables (e.g., Burch & Gordon, 1984; Cuthbertson, 1980; Grieves, 1983; Mankiw, 1985; Weber, 1975; see also Thomas, 1987). We would then expect an *inverse relationship* (negative sign) between these three variables and mass media expenditures: A rise (a positive percentage change) in relative price, unemployment, and interest rate would likely yield a decrease (a negative percentage change) in spending on mass media, particularly mass media durables (see Landsburg, 1992). Finally, we would hypothesize that population would be *positively* related to mass media expenditures: The more the population grows, the more likely aggregate mass media spending is to increase (positive sign).

Specification-wise, all regression models were first log-transformed[5] and then first-differenced (rather than expressed in levels). In an influential article, Granger and Newbold (1974) warned researchers about the possibilities of spurious relationships between non-stationary[6] economic variables, especially when the error term is itself non-stationary. These so-called "spurious" regression results may occur when the R^2 is very high, but the Durbin-Watson value (to assess the existence of serial correlation) is extremely low. In such situations, Granger and Newbold (1974) recommend to first-difference all variables (i.e., subtracting observations at t-1 from those at t) involved in the equation. Originally, Model 1 was run in levels, regressing the log of mass media expenditures on the log of the five independent variables, but the analysis revealed symptoms of potential spurious relationships: Most R^2 values exceeded .95, while DW values were often below .80. Following Granger and Newbold's (1974) suggestion, both log of mass media expenditures and log of DPI were first-differenced.

Model 1 is a static regression model because it tests whether the independent variables in the current period determine mass media expenditures in the current period. On the other hand, Model 2 is a representation of a dynamic regression model. A regression model is said to be *dynamic* if it contains a lagged dependent variable (i.e., variable at t-1, t-2...) and/or lagged independent variables (Doran, 1989). Dynamic regression analysis will be performed to assess whether changes in mass media expenditures react immediately to changes in income (or in other variables) or whether the effect of income (or other variables) is spread over several time periods. In this study, dynamic regressions will include both lagged dependent and independent variables; they are aptly labelled autoregressive distributed-lag (ADL) models (Griffiths, Hill, & Judge, 1993).

The distinction between static and dynamic modeling is an important one. Static models, which best characterize the existing PRC literature, are those assuming "an instantaneous adjustment to the new equilibrium values when prices and income change. More precisely, if p_t increases in period t, the quantity demanded for any good is supposed to react immediately and to take its new equilibrium value during the same period t" (Phlips, 1983, p. 155). Empirically, it means that static models do not contain lagged variables. But in reality, consumption, especially durable expenditures, often respond to income changes incrementally over several time periods-- months or years. This lapse of time is called a lag. Habit formation (i.e, consumption habits do not change automatically after a price decrease or an income increase) and the durability of certain goods (i.e., after having received a wage increase, consumers might not acquire a new durable good because they just purchased one last year, or they still might postpone the purchase of a new durable good until its price has declined due to technological advances and experience curve) are two theoretical reasons for using lags in regression analysis (Gujarati, 1989; Phlips, 1983).

Because of the limited sample, variables contained in the dynamic regression models were lagged only once. It is common econometric practice to pare down dynamic models when lagged or current regressors are not statistically significant at the $\leq .10$ level or close to that level. In econometric parlance, this procedure is called "testing down" (see Kennedy, 1992). The "testing down" methodology, also named test, test, test (TTT), calls for respecification from a general to a specific model using a battery of diagnostic tests until the model satisfies certain criteria, such as the assumptions of the classical linear regression (CLR) model.[7] This approach was used in this study: Insignificant regressors of the dynamic model were sequentially removed to obtain a simpler model in which all regressors would be significant at the .05 level and there would be no problem of serial correlation and heteroscedasticity.

Data Analysis

This study used Microfit 3.0, an econometric PC software package, for all time-series regression analyses (Pesaran & Pesaran, 1991). Regressions were run first for aggregate mass media expenditures (mass media) and then for each of the 10 individual categories. Special attention was paid to verify that the assumptions of the CLR model were met--primarily independence (i.e., absence of serial correlation) and equal variance (i.e., homoscedasticity) of residuals--through a series of diagnostic tests built into Microfit. Multicollinearity checks for static and dynamic regressions were also performed.

Serial Correlation (also called autocorrelation) occurs when successive observations of a variable are related to each other, violating the assumption of residuals independence (Hanke & Reitsch, 1992). In other words, the current period's value is dependent upon the preceding period's value, as opposed to being independent of it. In the presence of serial correlation, ordinary least squares (OLS) estimation might lead to overestimation of R^2 values and underestimation of tests of significance (Gujarati, 1988; Hanke & Reitsch, 1992).

The most frequently used approach to detect serial correlation is the Durbin-Watson (DW) test. If the computed DW's *d* statistic is larger than an upper bound figure, then this shows evidence of no serial correlation ($\rho = 0$). On the other hand, if the computed DW's *d* statistic is smaller than a lower bound figure, then this shows evidence of serial correlation ($\rho > 0$). If the computed DW's *d* statistic falls between the lower and upper bounds, the test is deemed inconclusive. In this case, we do not know whether there is a problem of serial correlation. In this study, assessment of DW's inconclusive results will be treated conservatively: Serial correlation will be assumed to exist and will be removed through a procedure adjusting standard errors (Newey-West).

It is important to realize that the DW's *d* (the most common DW test) is not an appropriate test of serial correlation for all regression models, although there is no consensus among econometricians about what constitutes the most appropriate test for serial correlation in autoregressive models (i.e., models that comprise a lagged dependent variable among their predictors). Recently, Dezhbakhsh (1990) tested the performance of the three Durbin-Watson test variants (*d*, *h*, and *m*) in autoregressive models with single lags and multiple lags. The tests were also investigated for small and large samples. The author concluded that both the *h* and *m* tests performed well in terms of power in small samples and with multiple lags of the dependent variable. The main difference between DW's *h* and *m* is that the *h* test is not applicable when the sample size multiplied by the variance of the coefficient of the lagged dependent variable (Y_{t-1}) exceeds 1. In this case, the *m* test should be used instead. Microfit computes both DW's *d* and *h* tests, but does not compute the *m* test, which was calculated following the guidelines of Berndt (1991), Dezhbakhsh (1990), and Kennedy (1992).[8]

In sum, DW's *d* was used for all regression models containing no lagged dependent variables (but possibly lagged independent variables), while DW's *h* was used for dynamic models containing a lagged dependent variable. If the DW's *h* was not applicable, then the DW's *m* was computed.

Heteroscedasticity: The classical linear regression model requires that the error term be independently (not serially correlated) identically (variance must be the same) distributed, or iid. In the context of demand analysis, the error term is homoscedastic when the conditional variance of expenditures for a good does not increase with the levels of income (Phlips, 1983). Heteroscedasticity is more likely to occur with cross-sectional data than with time-series data because the latter deals with aggregate longitudinal consumption series and not with individual consumers at a given point in time. In this study, all regression analyses were diagnosed with a built-in Microfit homoscedasticity test determining whether the residuals have a constant or equal variance (Pesaran & Pesaran, 1991). No problem of heteroscedasticity was uncovered.

Multicollinearity: Multicollinearity checks for static and dynamic models were conducted to ensure that tests of significance for individual regressors were reliable (see Gujarati, 1988). If two independent variables are highly correlated, it is impossible to isolate their respective contributions to the model. In this study, the auxiliary regression approach was used to detect multicollinearity. It is superior to the traditional correlation matrix approach because the latter diagnostic test only examines bivariate relationships between independent variables and fails to consider "the relationship of an independent variable with all the other independent variables" (Lewis-Beck, 1990, p. 60).[9] If the R^2 value exceeds .80 or so (indicating high multicollinearity), this would suggest that the particular independent variable is collinear with the other variables.

Multicollinearity did not pose a serious problem in most regressions: The largest coefficient of determination among static regressions was .476. For dynamic regressions, we would expect R^2 values to be higher (evidence of higher intercorrelations) because lagged variables have been added. This was generally the case in this study: Coefficients of determination ranged from a low .109 to a high .852 (for books, and this was the single instance of an R^2 value exceeding .80). It is worth noting that auxiliary regressions for both newspaper and book models showed higher R^2 values than did those for the other models, presumably because of the lower number of observations included in the estimation (n = 21).

Results

Disposable personal income was found to be a fairly weak predictor of mass media expenditures in Model 1 analyses; it was only statistically significant in the mass media model (and marginally so in the electronic media model, p = .066) (Table 1). Instead price and population were more likely to be significant predictors of Belgian consumer mass media spending than income. Overall statistically significant predictors included: price for newspapers, books, print media, radio/TV sets (p = .072), license fees, and audio/video hardware; population for mass media, books, license fees, and cable (p = .069); unemployment for books (p = .081), radio/TV sets, and electronic media (p = .068); income for mass media and electronic media (p = .066); and interest rate for books.

Because all variables but real interest rate were log-transformed, we can interpret the value of the regression coefficients as elasticities of the independent variable in respect to the dependent variable (see Phlips, 1983). More precisely, logarithmic first-differencing can be interpreted as the percentage change in Y (the dependent variable) from period t-1 to period t for a given change in X (the independent variable) (Berndt, 1991). For instance in the print media model, we would interpret the coefficients as follows: (1) intercept (all variables being held constant, there is a significant trend of 0.02% per year; it implies that print media expenditures increase by 0.02% per annum); (2) income (a 10% [or 1%] increase in income would yield a 1.36% [or 0.14%] increase in print media expenditures from one year to another); (3) price (a 10% increase in relative price would lead to a significant decrease of 2.87% in print media expenditures); (4) population (a 10% increase in population would result in a 8.57% increase in print media expenditures); and (5) unemployment (a 10% increase in unemployment would lead to a decrease of 0.05% in print media expenditures). To obtain the elasticity value of real interest rate, we divide the coefficient of interest rate (1 unit change in unit rate) by the sample mean of real interest rate (0.197). The average elasticity of real interest rate was found to be -0.015, suggesting that a 10% increase in interest rate would entail a 0.15% decrease in print media expenditures.

The second model examines the influence of lagged variables on changes in mass media expenditures, especially for media durable products. For the sake of parsimony, only reduced models (i.e., final models with statistically significant regressors) are reported in Table 2. Results for newspaper and book expenditures should only be regarded as indicative because of the limited sample and the large number of degrees of freedom absorbed by the additional regressors. While non-lagged variables remained key contributors to the reduced models (price: newspapers, books, cable; population: license fee), several lagged variables were found to predict significantly mass media expenditures ($income_{t-1}$: print media and audio/video software; $price_{t-1}$: radio/TV sets; $population_{t-1}$: mass media and print media; interest $rate_{t-1}$: books and print media [$p = .051$]; radio/TV $sets_{t-1}$: radio/TV sets; $cable_{t-1}$: cable).

Discussion and Conclusions

Consistent with past research conducted in the United States (Son & McCombs, 1993) and the United Kingdom (Dupagne, 1994), disposable personal income (DPI) was found to be a significant predictor of aggregate mass media expenditures in Belgium. But it was insignificant in all individual mass media expenditure regressions. Overall price and population were found to be better predictors of changes in mass media expenditures than income.

Surprisingly, the signs of the coefficients in the static equations were not always in the direction predicted. For instance, price was positively related to license fee expenditures. Perhaps license fee expenditures should be set apart from other mass media goods/services because a tax-based, non-discretionary media service is likely to elicit different consumer responses. Because Belgian consumers have little choice but pay this annual fee, it is of little consequence if the fee increases or not. Another unexpected finding was the negative relationship between population and aggregate mass media expenditures. As population increases by 1%, mass media expenditures decrease by 5.888%. It is possible that the population variable acts as a proxy variable for age distribution. Population grows with the addition of newborns and the expansion of the 65+ age group, but both couples with young children and elderly persons may be less likely to spend on mass media because of limited resources and higher priorities (e.g., medical care).

These findings are important for future mass media expenditures research because they imply that income may not be the best or the sole predictor of mass media expenditures. They also suggest that significant determinants of consumer mass media expenditures vary according to the type of mass media expenditures. For instance, while price was the major determinant of print media expenditures, unemployment was the key predictor of radio/TV set expenditures. Clearly it is equally important to run regression analysis with individual categories of mass media expenditures as it is with aggregate mass media spending.

This analysis also stresses the importance of going beyond the PRC and its current income-current expenditures relationship by incorporating new current and lagged regressors in future mass media spending models. Belgian consumers are sensitive to the price of mass media items, and this is true for print as well as electronic media. For the most part (the exception being the license fee) mass media spending is discretionary in nature, and the economic climate (unemployment) and the price of the goods will affect the evolution of consumer mass media expenditures. The message is equally clear as far as the role of lagged variables in media economics. These variables--although sometimes hard to interpret--are not to be neglected. For example, lagged income was found to be a significant predictor of print media and cable expenditures. In the same vein, past spending was a function of current spending for the radio/TV sets and cable regressions, suggesting that consumer behavior in Belgium is backward-looking for these two items.

The fact that lagged disposable personal income (DPI_{t-1}) was found to be a better predictor than current disposable personal income (DPI_t for some of the regressions opens the door to new mass media expenditures research that offers theoretical explanations for the statistical significance of lagged variables. For instance, in his classic *Econometrica* study, Brown (1952) examined the influence of lagged variables on current consumption. He reasoned that "the presence of lags means that the full reaction of consumers to changes of income does not occur immediately but instead takes place gradually" (p. 355). Brown first tested the relationship between current consumption, current disposable income, and lagged disposable income. The equation, a distributed-lag model,[10] was formulated as $C = a_0 + a_1Y + a_2Y_{-1} + u$. "This hypothesis suggests that consumers are slow to adjust to current income changes because of some inertia in their reactions to these changes" (Brown, 1952, p. 358). This inertia exists because consumers' memories still depend upon the highest level of disposable income achieved in the past. Then Brown tested a second hypothesis, which will become known as the habit persistence theory, in which he lagged consumption instead of income ($C = a_0 + a_1Y + a_2C_{t-1} + u$). This autoregressive model posited that "the lag effect in consumer demand was produced by the consumption habits which people formed as a result of past consumption" (p. 359). So the reason why consumers react to income changes with a certain slowness is because they are still under the impression of past *consumption* levels. Both models have as much psychological as economic relevance, and as such they may stimulate communication researchers from different perspectives to test these hypotheses with consumer mass media expenditures.

Future research should replicate this analysis with other country data and test the predictive value of these or other mass media spending models in forecasting. Ultimately, the best way to confirm the usefulness of an econometric model is to assess whether it can reasonably predict future values, at least in the short term. Another application for dynamic models would be to derive short-run and long-run income elasticities using partial adjustment or adaptive expectation procedures (Berndt, 1991). Whereas short-run elasticities report the immediate/partial response in mass media expenditures to a change in income, long-run elasticities represent the cumulative/total effect of a change in income on mass media expenditures. Especially in the case of durables, knowing whether the effect of an increase in income is spread over a number of years or immediate is a promising area of research for understanding the relationship between income and mass media spending over time.

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Notes

1.Bordered by the North Sea and the Netherlands in the north, France in the south, and Germany and Luxembourg in the east, Belgium is a small, densely populated country where 10,021,997 (1991) inhabitants share an area of 30,528 km^2 (about the size of the state of Maryland) (Institut National de Statistique [INS], 1993). In 1991, its gross domestic product (GDP) was 6,723 billion Belgian francs, that is, 670,824 BF per capita (about $19,200) (INS, 1993). Belgium is a parliamentary monarchy, and constitutionally a federal state since 1993, with a complex governmental structure of national, community, regional, provincial, and communal (municipal) institutions. At the national level, key institutions include the House of Representatives, the Senate, and the King. At the community level, there are three Communities: Flemish, French, and German. Finally, at the regional level, Belgium has three Regions: Flanders in the north (57.8% of the total population), Wallonia in the south (32.6%)--which includes German speakers (0.7%)--, and Brussels in the center (9.6%) (INS, 1993).

2.BRT (Belgische Radio en Televisie) was renamed BRTN (Nederlandse Uitzendingen in Belgie - Omroep van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap) in early 1991.

3.It would have been more appropriate to use household instead of population data--because consumers purchase some media goods (e.g., a TV set) for the benefit of their families, and not just for themselves--, but the INS does not collect annual household data.

4.Relative prices were used to satisfy the homogeneity assumption of demand analysis (i.e., there should be no change in the quantity demanded if prices and income change proportionally).

5.Interest rate was not log-transformed because of negative values. Logarithmic transformation is a standard procedure in economic empirical analysis to alleviate problems of heteroscedasticity. The literature on applied consumption research has shown that the linear functional form provides a poor statistical fit for Engel curves and that the double-logarithmic functional form offered the best estimates of income elasticities (based on goodness of fit) for most commodities (see Phlips, 1983). An attractive characteristic of the double-log functional form--that made widely it popular in applied research--is that the slope coefficient β directly measures the elasticity of Y in respect to X (e.g., for income elasticity, the percent change in consumption of a good due to a one percent change in income) (see Gujarati, 1988).

6.A series is said to be stationary if its mean, variance, and autovariances are independent of time.

7.There are two fundamental approaches to specification of econometric multiple regression models: testing up and testing down. The "testing up" methodology (from a specific to a general model), also called the average economic regression (AER), tends to rely on sophisticated estimation methods to solve specification problems (e.g., when the Durbin-Watson test indicates the presence of serial correlation). The "testing up" approach has often been criticized for being little more than a "fishing expedition," because researchers may adopt alternative specifications to obtain insignificant diagnostic tests, significant *t* values, and high R^2 values (Kennedy, 1992).

8.The computation of the DW's *m* test involves three steps: First, we run a regression model with a lagged dependent variable according to OLS and save the residuals of that regression (u_t); then, we use the saved residuals (u_t) as the dependent variable and regress them on the saved residuals lagged once (u_{t-1}) and all the regressors in the original model; and finally, we test the statistical significance of the coefficient of u_{t-1}. If the coefficient of u_{t-1} is not significantly different from zero, that means that the residuals of the original regression equation are uncorrelated.

9.To perform an auxiliary regression, one regresses each independent variable on all the remaining independent variables (e.g., income on price of newspapers, population, unemployment, and interest rate).

10.A distributed-lag model contains one or several lagged independent variables on the right side of the equation.

Table 1
Static Regression Models of Determinants of Mass Media Expenditures

Dependent variable	Independent variables (coefficients)						R^2	$\bar{R}^2$	F	DW's d
Expenditure	Intercept	Income	Price	Population	Unemployment	Interest rate				
Mass media	0.044***	0.604*	0.271	-5.888*	-0.280E-5	0.003	.237	.118	1.991	2.013
Newspapers[a]	0.028**	-0.246	-0.238**	-0.473	-0.023	-0.001	.270	.026	1.107	2.280[b]
Books[a]	-0.007	0.205	-1.961***	31.496*	-0.046+	-0.018*	.721	.628	7.758***	1.720[b]
Print media	0.022*	0.136	-0.287*	0.857	-0.005	-0.003	.194	.068	1.541	1.856
Radio/TV sets[a]	0.026	0.663	-1.155+	-0.243	-0.172*	-0.779E-3	.229	.109	1.900	1.256[b]
License fees[a]	0.025	-0.033	0.174*	11.799*	-0.054	0.007	.267	.152	2.330+	1.596[b]
A/V hardware	-0.012	1.098	-1.846*	12.692	-0.158	-0.005	.290	.179	2.611*	1.977
A/V software[a]	0.125***	0.588	0.299	-5.028	-0.082	-0.007	.098	-.043	0.696	1.687[b]
Cable[a]	0.078+	1.937	-1.611	-19.114+	0.173	-0.012	.226	.105	1.864	0.701
Elect. media[a]	0.068***	0.611+	0.189	1.127	-0.059+	0.006	.117	-.021	0.846	1.490[b]
Movies[a]	-0.050***	0.303	0.131	-3.453	0.025	0.006	.084	-.059	0.587	2.214[b]

[a] Standard errors were adjusted using the Newey-West procedure, Parzen weights.

[b] Inconclusive

+$p \le .10$; *$p \le .05$; **$p \le .01$; ***$p \le .001$

Table 2
Reduced Dynamic Regression Models of Determinants of Mass Media Expenditures

Dependent variable	Independent variables (coefficients)												$\bar{R}^2$	F	DW
Expenditure	Intercept	DV$_{t-1}$	Income	Income$_{t-1}$	Price	Price$_{t-1}$	Pop	Pop$_{t-1}$	Unemp	Unemp$_{t-1}$	Interest	Interest$_{t-1}$			
Mass media	0.060***							-4.279*					.085	4.335*	1.758
Newspapers	0.020**				-0.299*								.156	4.701*	2.001
Books[a]	0.058*				-1.920***						-0.018*	-0.018***	.504	7.786**	1.136[b]
Print media[a]	0.024**			0.391*	-0.461***		3.505**	-4.451*				-0.005+	.260	3.530	1.694[b]
Radio/TV sets	0.034	0.420*			-1.570***	1.178*							.286	5.811**	0.031
License fees	0.026						11.971*						.193	9.852**	1.643
A/V hardware	0.082***				-0.894								.041	2.580	1.869
A/V software[a]	0.082***			1.055*									.048	2.822	1.525[b]
Cable	-0.025	0.828***			-1.840***								.769	60.828***	-0.525
Elect. media	0.053	0.282	0.587	-0.173	-0.031	0.401	3.959	-2.658	-0.058	0.035	0.006	-0.995E-3	.124	0.639	0.017
Movies	-0.048***									-0.076			.036	2.339	2.181

[a] Standard errors were adjusted using the Newey-West procedure, Parzen weights.
[b] Inconclusive (DW's d)
$+p \leq .10$; $*p \leq .05$; $**p \leq .01$; $***p \leq .001$

The Business of Newspaper Companies:
Are Newspapers Part of Their Future?

Karen Cristiano
Media Management and Economics Division
AEJMC Convention

Abstract

This paper examines the business of newspaper companies. It is divided into two sections. The first portrays the present state of newspaper companies, providing an in-depth look at seven of the top newspaper companies in the United States, including current trends, such as investment in electronic media. The second section examines where newspaper companies are headed as the dawn of a new millennium nears, including the controversial decision by some to avoid electronic media.

The Business of Newspaper Companies:
Are Newspapers Part of Their Future?

Karen Cristiano
Temple University
e-mail: kcrist@p3.net

Media Management and Economics Division
AEJMC Convention

Running head: NEWSPAPERS

Traditionally, the business of newspaper companies has been newspapers. While there might have been a radio or television station or two (or a few more), or perhaps an interest in a newsprint mill, maybe even something totally divorced from newspapers, such as a travel company, newspaper companies were mostly about newspapers. The names Dow Jones, Gannett, Knight-Ridder, Times Mirror, and New York Times all conjure up images of companies with large flagship newspapers heading up stables of smaller papers. The fortunes and the futures of these companies resided on their newspaper properties and everything else was peripheral.

In the second half of the last decade of the 20th century, the business of newspaper companies can be everything from on-line computer services, television content, alternate postal delivery, individualized business stories, specialized information, new technology development . . . and, oh yes, newspapers. Although newspapers continue to be the cash cows of newspaper companies that are branching out into every possible information field, many of the companies and the experts that pontificate about the future of newspapers predict electronic media will edge out ink smeared on dead trees.

To that end most companies, with a few exceptions, are pouring resources into the development of the media that they believe are the future -- the media that are resulting from a convergence of technology, including computers, advanced technology, such as direct broadcast satellites, and "traditional" forms of news delivery, such as newspapers. In many cases newspaper companies are, despite newspapers' recent return to profit-making glory, making drastic cuts on the newspaper side, not only to stay lean, but to have the resources to branch out into electronic media. Although some newspaper companies are clearly convinced that some form of this converged media, such as the World Wide Web, the Internet, and on-line are the future of information in the United States, other companies appear less convinced, but invest, tepidly at best, to at least stay in the race with the leaders. Already, in fact, there has been a shake-out in new technology investments, such as Times Mirror closing its consumer multimedia group for development of electronic products and services.

This paper will examine two facets of the business of newspaper companies. The first will be the present state of newspapers with an examination of the current trends, including where newspapers companies are at present. The second facet will examine where newspaper companies are headed, both by their own accounts and those of experts who predict dire circumstances if these companies don't embrace electronic media wholeheartedly.

Newspaper Companies Today

How well newspaper companies are doing today depends on whether you own or plan to buy stock in publicly owned companies, or whether you subscribe to a newspaper, or work for -- or used to work for -- a newspaper. As Cathleen Black, former president and chief executive officer of The Newspaper Association of America, before being appointed to run Hearst magazines, said earlier this year during NEXPO '95 in Atlanta: "Anybody who follows our industry today is going to see what appears to be some conflicting signals on one hand . . . a smaller share of ad spending . . . rising newsprint costs . . . and dire headlines about the threat of electronic media . . . on the other hand . . . record-breaking ad revenue, exciting home pages on the World Wide Web, solid demographics, and leading market shares" (Black, 1995a, Online). The encouraging statistics that demonstrate newspapers have rebounded from the recession of the early 1990s are used in the slick annual reports mailed to investors and those who might plan on investing. They are also touted in news releases by the NAA to the very newspapers where reporters are being offered buy-outs -- or laid off outright -- where the newshole gets tinier every day, and where cost-cutting measures, some as small as requiring reporters to use phone books instead of directory assistance, some as major as closing bureaus and consolidating staff, are taking place.

The first part of this section will examine the newspaper industry today from the view of the corporate office, where recent reports indicate that papers are rebounding from their slump. The second will look at the industry from the aspect of those who work in or read newspapers.

Good News from Corporate Headquarters

As a snapshot on the current state of newspapers, consider these facts from the NAA:

-- United States newspapers posted the best first half advertising revenues since 1988 during 1995, rising 6.1% to $16.74 billion.

-- In terms of profits, of the 19 public newspaper companies reporting earnings during the second quarter of 1995, 15 reported revenue gains, one reported no change in revenue, and three had lower profits compared to the same period last year.

-- Total newspaper advertising revenue totaled $34.11 billion in 1994, with retail contributing $17.50 billion, classified bringing in $12.46 billion, and national advertising accounting for $4.15 billion.

-- Newspapers carry more advertising than any other medium -- 22.8% -- compared to broadcast television (20.8%), direct mail (19.8%), radio (7%), and magazines (5.3%). (See chart 1.)

(Chart 1)

U.S. Daily Newspapers' Share of Advertising Expenditures

(All figures are in millions)

	1993	%Total	1994(1)	%Total	%Change
Daily Newspapers	$31,869	23.1	$34,180	22.8	7.3
National	$3,853	2.8	$4,158	2.8	7.9
Retail	$16,859	12.2	$17,532	11.7	4.0
Classified	$11,157	8.1	$12,490	8.3	11.9
Magazines	$7,357	5.3	$7,980	5.3	8.5
Broadcast TV	$28,020	20.3	$31,180	20.8	11.3
Cable Television	$2,564	1.9	$3,034	2.0	18.3
Radio	$9,457	6.9	$10,529	7.0	11.3
Farm Publications	$243	0.2	$255	0.2	4.9
Direct Mail	$27,266	19.8	$29,638	19.8	8.7
Business Pub.	$3,260	2.4	$3,425	2.3	5.1
Outdoor	$1,090	0.8	$1,120	0.7	2.8
Yellow Pages	$9,517	6.9	$9,825	6.5	3.2
Miscellaneous*	$17,281	12.5	$18,838	12.6	9.0
Grand Total- Nat.	$80,243	58.2	$87,762	58.5	9.4
Grand Total-Local	$57,681	41.8	$62,262	41.5	.9
TOTAL - ALL MEDIA	$137,924	100.0	$150,004	100.0	8.8

* Includes weeklies, shoppers, pennysavers, bus and cinema advertising.

(1) Preliminary estimates

Sources: Facts About Newspapers 1995 from the NAA -- newspapers, McCann-Erickson, Inc. (all other media)

-- 115.4 million American adults (61.5%) read a daily newspaper on an average weekday in 1994, up from 114.7 million in 1993.

-- More than 132.2 million American adults (70.4%) read a Sunday newspaper in an average week in 1994, up from 128.8 million in 1993.

-- More than 65% of Americans who watched television news also got their news from the daily newspaper.

-- More than 70 percent of Americans who watched television news also got their news from the Sunday newspaper.

-- In the 18- to 24-year-old category, 52% read a daily newspaper on an average weekday in 1994, up almost 1% from 1993; 63% read a Sunday newspaper in an average week, up almost 2% from last year.

-- Newspapers led all other media in the development of electronic on-line services, with approximately 120 newspapers offering electronic versions of their newspapers online -- and the number grows daily.

-- Newspaper employment in the United States increased to 504,000 in 1994, from 451,700 in 1993. (This is expected to change for 1995, however, with the downsizings taking place among major newspaper companies in the past year.)

These statistics clearly point to the resurgence of newspaper strength. After years of fairly flat or dipping advertising expenditures in newspapers (see chart 2), 1994 saw a big jump in revenue. The same is true of weekday and weekend readership (see chart 3). The percentage of adults who read daily newspapers peaked in the early 1970s, and slowly decreased and 1994 is part of that slide. The weekend readership, however, has steadily been improving since 1988, despite a slight dip in 1991. In 1993 and 1994 it took a mammoth jump of nearly 8 million adult readers. The increased growth of Sunday readership -- the once-a-week large compilation of specialized news and entertainment -- might be an example of the niche reporting newspapers are being urged to consider to stay competitive in the future. This will be discussed in the second half of this paper.

(Chart 2)

U.S. Daily Newspaper Advertising Expenditures

(All figures are in millions, except GDP, which is in billions)

Year	National Advertising	Retail Advertising	Classified Advertising	Total Newspaper Advertising	Gross Dom. Prod.
1950	$518	$1,175	$377	$2,070	$286
1960	$778	$2,100	$803	$3,861	$513
1970	$891	$3,292	$1,521	$5,704	$1010
1980	$1,963	$8,609	$4,222	$14,794	$2,708
1985	$3,352	$13,443	$8,375	$25,170	$4,038
1990	$4,122	$16,652	$11,506	$32,280	$5,522
1991	$3,924	$15,839	$10,587	$30,349	$5,677
1992	$3,834	$16,041	$10,764	$30,639	$6,020
1993	$3,853	$16,859	$11,157	$31,869	$6,343
1994 (1)	$4,158	$17,532	$12,490	$34,180	$6,736

(1) Preliminary Estimates
Sources: NAA, U.S. Department of Commerce

(Chart 3)

Weekday Newspaper Readers

	%Adult Population	Adult Readers	Male	Female
1970	77.6	98,183	46,659	51,524
1977	68.5	103,543	49,968	53,575
1980	66.9	106,043	52,559	53,484
1985	64.2	108,812	53,718	55,094
1990	62.4	113,090	55,798	57,292
1991	62.1	113,322	56,114	57,207
1992	62.6	115,296	57,499	57,797
1993	61.7	114,669	57,091	57,578
1994	61.5	115,376	57,216	58,160

Sunday Newspaper Readers

	% Adult Population	Adult Readers (1)
1970	72.3	91,642
1977	67.5	90,088
1980	67.9	102,690
1985	65.1	110,255
1990	67.1	121,622
1991	66.9	122,045
1992	68.4	125,940
1993	69.0	128,227
1994	70.4	132,219

(1) Age 18 and over
Source: Simmons Market Research Bureau national survey estimates

Although the statistics from the NAA cover all daily newspapers, this paper examines newspaper companies more closely by looking at the annual reports from 7 of the 10 largest newspaper companies -- Knight-Ridder, Gannett Co., Times Mirror Co., The New York Times Co., Dow Jones & Co., Thomson Newspapers, Inc., and the Tribune Co. (See chart 4.) The seven newspaper companies examined here also control nearly half of the daily newspapers printed out of the top 20 companies -- 281 of the 607. Their daily circulations reach 20 million people, out of the 59 million reached by all U.S. dailies, or 33%.

In addition, a look at some newspaper companies in general will give an assessment of the state of the newspaper business, in that only 77 U.S. newspapers with circulations of 30,000 or greater are still independently owned (Martens, 1995). The day of the independent newspaper is clearly gone. As indicated in chart 5, there are a great number of daily newspapers in this country, but only 235 with circulations over 50,000.

(Chart 4)

The 20 Largest U.S. Newspaper Companies

	Daily Circulation (1)	Number of Dailies	Sunday Circulation	Number Sunday Editions
Gannett Co., Inc.	5,830,579	82	6,072,313	67
Knight-Ridder, Inc.	3,605,770	27	5,109,471	24
Newhouse Newspapers	2,960,366	26	3,832,894	21
Times Mirror Co. (2)	2,624,426	11	3,349,296	8
The New York Times Co.	2,436,436	25	3,357,236	17
Dow Jones & Co.	2,365,615	22	534,468	13
Thomson Newspapers	2,071,469	108	1,902,574	76
Tribune	1,348,455	6	1,985,086	6
Cox Enterprises, Inc.	1,315,319	19	1,792,815	17
E.W. Scripps Co.	1,295,234	18	1,341,339	12
Hearst Newspapers	1,231,185	12	2,514,953	10
American Publishing Co.	1,080,298	96	694,209	18
MediaNews Group	1,065,508	16	1,302,403	15
Freedom Newspapers, Inc.	940,061	26	1,034,617	20
The Washington Post Co.	860,796	2	1,204,699	2
Central Newspapers	820,991	9	1,023,895	4
McClatchy Newspapers	819,416	12	970,226	9
Donrey Media Group (3)	765,383	51	791,642	44
Morris Communications	722,735	31	819,964	15
Capital Cities/ABC, Inc.	730,805	8	994,030	6

(1) Averages for six months ended Sept. 30, 1994
(2) Includes circulation of La Opinion, in which the company has a 50% ownership
(3) Formerly Donrey Media

Also note: In the first 11 months of 1995 many of these media companies sold or purchased newspapers, such as Thomson, which sold 25% of its papers, or Knight-Ridder, which acquired 4. This chart, although out of date for specifics, is still current as to the order in which the top 20 companies appear.

Sources: NAA, Thomas Vander Poel, Lynch, Jones & Ryan; Audit Bureau of Circulations.

(Chart 5)

Number of Daily Newspapers

		Circulation				Dailies over 50,000	
Year	Total	Under 50,000	50,000 - 100,000	100,000 - 250,000	Over 250,000	Number	% of Total
1946	1,763	1,564	91	70	38	199	11.3
1950	1,772	1,571	82	84	35	201	11.3
1960	1,763	1,540	111	83	44	223	12.7
1970	1,748	1,491	127	92	38	257	14.7
1975	1,756	1,504	135	81	36	252	14.3
1980	1,745	1,479	145	86	35	258	15.2
1985	1,676,	1,418	141	82	35	258	15.4
1990	1,611	1,343	143	79	43	268	16.6
1991	1,586	1,336	129	78	43	250	15.8
1992	1,570	1,323	132	72	43	247	15.7
1993	1,552	1,317	125	68	42	235	15.1
1994(1)	1,538	1,303	126	68	41	235	18.0

(1) Preliminary data. Circulation is calculated through March 1, 1995.
Sources: Editor and Publisher 1946-1992, NAA 1993-1994

In addition, of the top 20 daily circulating papers in the country, 11 are owned by the newspaper companies examined here. (See chart 6.) And those 11, The Wall Street Journal (owned by Dow Jones), USA Today (owned by Gannett), The New York Times and The Boston Globe (owned by The New York Times Co.), the Los Angeles Times and Newsday (owned by Times Mirror), Chicago Tribune (owned by the Tribune Co.), and the Detroit Free Press, The Philadelphia Inquirer, and Miami Herald (all owned by Knight-Ridder), account for more than 9.3 million of the 59 million in daily newspaper circulation -- or 15% -- of all the daily newspapers circulated. (See chart 7.)

(Chart 6)

Average Daily Circulation of Top 20 Newspapers (1)

The Wall Street Journal	1,780,422 (m)
USA Today (2)	1,551,503 (m)
The New York Times	1,114,905 (m)
Los Angeles Times	1,062,202 (m)
The Washington Post	810,675 (m)
Daily News, New York,	753,024 (m)
Newsday	693,556 (all day)
Chicago Tribune	678,081 (m)
Detroit Free Press	544,606 (m)
Chicago Sun-Times	518,094 (m)
San Francisco Chronicle	509,548 (m)
The Boston Globe	506,545 (m)
The Dallas Morning News	491,480 (m)
The Philadelphia Inquirer	478,999 (m)
The Star-Ledger, Newark	455,919 (m)
Houston Chronicle	409,340 (m)
Star Tribune, Minneapolis	407,504 (m)
New York Post	405,318 (m)
The Plain Dealer, Cleveland	394,692 (m)
Miami Herald	380,328 (m)

(1) ABC FAS-FAX, Sept. 30, 1994
(2) Adjusted circulation
Source: Audit Bureau of Circulations
It should be noted that since this chart was developed some changes have occurred, including the closure of the New York Newsday section and the strike at the Detroit Free Press, altering circulation. However, these numbers still provide a basis of comparison of the top 20 circulating newspapers.

Annual reports from 1994 emphasize, as they are supposed to, what good investments newspaper companies are:

-- Revenue rose 8% at Dow Jones, exceeding $2 billion for the first time in the company's history, and earnings increased 21% to $178 million, or $1.80 a share,

(Chart 7)

U.S. Daily Newspaper Circulation

Year	Morning	Evening	Total	Sunday
1946	20,545,908	30,381,597	50,927,505	43,665,364
1950	21,266,126	32,562,946	53,829,072	46,582,348
1960	24,028,788	34,852,958	58,881,746	47,698,651
1970	25,933,783	36,173,744	62,107,527	49,216,602
1980	29,414,036	32,787,804	62,201,840	54,671,755
1985	36,361,561	26,404,671	62,766,232	58,825,978
1990	41,308,361	21,015,795	62,324,156	62,634,512
1991	41,469,756	19,217,369	60,687,125	62,159,971
1992	42,387,813	17,776,686	60,164,499	62,159,971
1993	42,689,513	16,903,606	59,593179	62,591,355
1994 (1)	42,826,316	16,198,430	59,024,805	62,411,791

(1) Preliminary Data. Circulation is calculated through March 1, 1995.
Sources: Editor & Publisher 1946-1992, NAA 1993-1994

which was also a record for Dow Jones (excluding nonrecurring items).

-- Thomson earned $427 million, an increase of 21.3% over 1993, and the earnings per common share of stock were up 19.4%.

-- The Tribune Co. earned $396 million in profit, up from $356 million in profit in 1993. The percentage of net income was 28%, which, while impressive, was a dip by more than half of the percentage of net income profit made in 1993, which was 57%.

-- The New York Times Co. saw revenues increase 17%, totaling $2.36 billion, a gain made possible by owning The Boston Globe a full year. Net income was $213.3 million or $2.05 per share. This seems like a most impressive gain, especially when compared with 1993, when the company made net income of only $6.1 million or 7 cents per share. However, earnings in 1993 were kept low because of several charges: 56 cents per share against equity in operations of the Forest Products Group to write down The New York Times Co. investment in Gaspesia; 23 cents per share for costs related to staff reductions at The New York Times newspaper; 5 cents per share for an unfavorable tax adjustment due to a federal corporate income tax rate increase; 2 cents per share due to a severe 1993 snowstorm that disrupted delivery of The Times; and 2 cents per share on the sale of assets. Therefore, the 7 cents a share revenue should have been 95 cents in 1993. In 1994, 99 cents of the $2.07 per share earnings was due to the sale of the Women's Magazines Division, the United Kingdom golf publications, and a minority interest in Gaspesia Pulp and Paper Company Ltd. Therefore, the truer numbers would have been a 95 cents per share profit in 1993 and a $1.06 cents per share profit in 1994, for an increase in profit per share of 11.5%, which is more in line with the rest of the newspaper companies.

-- Times Mirror reported a 3.5% increase in revenue to $3.36 billion. Income increased to $126.2 million, or 98 cents per share, compared to $51.7 million or 40 cents per share in 1993. However, net income was down in 1994, from $317,159,000 to $173,117,000, or a decrease of about 45%.

-- Gannett also had a good year, with operating revenues up 5% to $3.8 billion, a new record. Earnings set a record, too, with earnings per share going up 19% to $3.23 per share.

--Knight-Ridder also had a record-breaking year for the company, with total company revenue up to $2.6 billion, an 8.1% increase. Net income was $170.9 million, up 16.3% from 1993, and up substantially from any previous year in the company's history. Earnings per share of $3.15 increased 17.5%, up from $2.68 in the previous year.

(Chart 8)

1994 Profits/Share Earnings for Newspaper Companies

	Revenue Increase	Net Income % Increase (Decrease)	Net Income Per Share%
Dow Jones	8%	21%	21.6%
Thomson	12.3%	21.3%	19.4%
Tribune Co.	11%	28%	30%
The New York Times Co.	17%	338%	2828%
Times Mirror	3.5%	(45%)	145%
Gannett Co.	5%	17%	19%
Knight-Ridder	f8.1%	16.3%	17.5%

The numbers, then, are impressive for nearly all newspaper companies. With the exception of the blip at Times Mirror, all reported anywhere from good to astounding increases in revenue, net income, and income per share. Of course, one good year cannot be used as a barometer of the business of newspaper companies. It is helpful to look at some long-term trends to see if newspaper companies are doing well year after year, if there have been some downward trends in the past, or whether the situation has dramatically improved. Following in chart 9 is a look at the past 9 years of the net income profit, or loss, and the earnings per share profit, or loss, for the 7 companies studied here.

Although it is difficult to make broad assumptions from a comparison of these numbers, a specific pattern does appear. Most newspapers were doing well until 1990, but most took financial hits in 1991 or 1992, and a few, such as the Tribune Co. had its bad year in 1990. Newspaper companies that were doing well at the beginning of the decade were almost uniformly hit by the recession and only in the

(Chart 9)

Net Income (Loss) (In thousands of dollars) Of Seven Publically Owned Newspaper Firms

	1985	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
New York Times	*	$64	$46	($44)	$6	$213
Thomson	*	$385	$292	$336	$352	$427
Times Mirror	$237	$180	$81	($66)	$317	$173
Dow Jones	$138	$106	$72	$107	$147	$178
Gannett	$253	$376	$301	$345	$397	$465
Tribune Co.	$123	($63)	$141	$119	$188	$242
Knight-Ridder	$132	$149	$132	$40	$148	$170

Earnings (Loss) Per Share

	1985	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
New York Times	*	.85	.61	(.14)	.07	2.05
Thomson	*	.70	.53	.30	.48	.74
Times Mirror	1.75	1.40	.64	(.52)	2.46	1.35
Dow Jones	1.43	1.06	.71	1.17	1.48	1.83
Gannett	1.50	2.36	2.00	2.40	2.72	3.23
Tribune Co.	1.53	(1.22)	1.94	1.56	2.56	3.32
Knight-Ridder	2.05	2.94	2.55	2.65	2.68	3.15

past year have they managed to return to their former profit-making glory. It is easy looking at these numbers to understand why the corporate offices are not using their profits and are in fact cutting back in case the next recession is just around the corner.

It is also important to note that while most newspaper companies today have their resources in many places other than newspapers, the newspaper portion of the company has led the way in income. For instance, at The New York Times Co., newspapers were responsible for 81.6% or $196.1 million percent of the operating profit and 83.5% or $1,968.3 million of revenues by segment. Thomson Newspapers segments its company into three divisions: a travel company, a publishing company, which includes specialized information, and newspaper publishing. Of the $686 million in operating profit before amortization and corporate expenses, the newspaper division accounted for only $162 million, or 23%, barely eclipsing the travel group, with $137 million. Although Thomson Newspapers has only about a quarter of its resources in newspapers, it is included here because it is the seventh largest owner of newspapers in circulation, and the largest owner by far of number of dailies of all the newspaper companies operating in the United States.

At the Tribune Co., of the $396 million in total operating profit, $297 million came from daily newspapers. However, the company *lost* $10 million on its other publication ventures, such as direct mail, online/electronic products, and syndication of editorial products, so the daily newspapers helped to subsidize this area of the company, as the two are included under publishing.

Over at Dow Jones, its business publications (including Barron's, a business magazine) and the Wall Street Journal, and its string of 20 small, quality, community newspapers could muster up only a little more revenue combined than the revenue from information services run by the company, such as its News Retrieval Service, Telerate, and other Business Information Services. This category alone was responsible for $976 million in revenue, as opposed to $862 million for the business publications and $252 for the community newspapers.

At the Times Mirror, $194 million of $294 million in operating profit was due to newspaper publishing. Consumer media, which included 10 special interest magazines, lost more than $4 million. The only other bright spot for Times Mirror was the sale of its professional information, which made $173.9 million. This included such areas as legal publishing, flight information, and health information services.

At Gannett, of the $3.8 billion in net operating revenues, newspaper advertising and circulation were responsible for more than $3 billion of that, eclipsing the broadcasting and outdoor advertising segments of the company. At Knight-Ridder, 81% or $2.1 billion of operating revenue is attributable to newspaper revenues and only 19% to its Business Information Services, such as online and data services.

Clearly, then, newspapers are more than holding their own. In fact, those who are observing the radical changes taking place as newspaper companies try to compete in electronic and other fields, might wonder why they all are not attempting to shore up the field they do best in (some, as noted later in this paper, are doing just that). Part of that answer follows, in the downside of the newspaper business -- the side of those who work in newspapers, and those who buy newspapers to read. It is here that the rosy predictions touted to shareholders turn a murky gray.

Bad News from Corporate Headquarters

Newspaper companies are making money. Net income increased 21% at Dow Jones and Thomson, 16.3 % at Knight-Ridder, 17% at Gannett, and 338% at The New York Times Co. last year (although the numbers for The New York Times Co. are skewed, as noted above). Even though some companies, such as Times Mirror with a 45% loss, had a difficult year, overall the industry is making money for its shareholders, often on the backs of its newspapers. Why, then, are newspapers raising circulation prices, laying off reporters and editors or offering to buy them out, closing newspapers outright, cutting back newshole, and generally tightening the belt?

There's no one answer. Some point to the spiraling increase in newsprint, others to the problems of attracting national advertising, still others to the need to put some resources into the future, such as online and electronic services, hereafter called electronic media. Then, too, despite the happy statistics at the end of 1994, the ones still used by newspaper companies when they want to attract or keep shareholders, the news has been somewhat gloomy in 1995. These are the statistics trotted out when closing such newspapers as New York Newsday or trimming 800 jobs at the Los Angeles Times.

Consider:

-- Newsprint has increased 40% this year, with more increases predicted. Newsprint costs are the second largest expense at newspapers.

-- A devastating strike against the two Detroit newspapers, the Free Press and the Detroit News, owned in a Joint Operating Agreement by Knight-Ridder and Gannet, respectively, has cost both companies millions of dollars. The five-month-old strike shows no signs of resolution although both papers are publishing with strike replacement workers. Knight-Ridder recently sent notices to shareholders that the strike cost them 50 cents in each common share stock.

-- The Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC) reported on Oct. 31 that circulation figures ending Sept. 30 showed that 7 of 10 U.S. daily newspapers in the top metro markets lost circulation. This was attributed to the high cost of newsprint, which forced some metro newspapers to limit their single copy sales. This also follows a drop in circulation in spring of 1995, for the third consecutive six-month period. The Los Angeles Times lost 46,000 subscribers, the Wall Street Journal lost 32,000, the New York Times lost 16,000, and the Washington Post lost 17,000, for example.

-- The ABC also reported that it now costs nearly $30 to acquire a new subscriber, so newspapers are trying to increase the emphasis on building longer term subscriptions, with less discounting and special incentive orders.

-- Although advertising continues to greatly subsidize subscriptions, newspapers are getting more aggressive, according to the ABC, and are raising prices to force the consumer to pay more.

-- National advertising continues to elude newspapers. A recent national survey of media executives from the top 200 advertising agencies found that newspapers trailed all other advertising media except billboards and place-based media (King, 1995).

-- Although newspaper companies overall are doing well, some of the larger newspapers are not making as much profit as the others, and Wall Street investors are warning companies to improve the bottom line. For instance, the two Philadelphia papers, The Inquirer and Daily News, had an operating profit margin of about 8% last year, but the chain that owns them, Knight-Ridder, had a profit of 16.3%. Recently, the chain tried to make a deal with the Philadelphia newspapers -- receive concessions from the paper's 10 unions in return for a promise that the Daily News won't close until at least the year 2000. And, the profit margin must be 12% in 1995 and 15% in 1996. As of December 1, the Guild, the largest of the 10 unions with 1,250 members, still had not agreed to the concessions, although talks were continuing.

Newspaper companies clearly can't wait for the situation to worsen before taking action. At some companies the changes have been drastic -- The Inquirer had to slash $30 million immediately, resulting in buyouts, a freeze on overtime and part-timers -- even full-time staffers who made extra money with record or music reviews were cut off. At the Times Mirror, one of the worst hurt of the newspaper companies, drastic action included closing the New York City version of Newsday as well as combining foreign bureaus among the Los Angeles Times, Newsday, and the Baltimore Sun. At the Newsday on Long Island that survives, the management is under orders to boost its profit margin from 7% to 17%.

Most news about cuts and orders to boost profits have had a good effect on Wall

Street analysts (Glaberson, 1995a). Their effect on those who work for the newspapers and who perceive that quality is being cut, naturally, has not been a happy one. Said Gene Miller of the Miami Herald: "Knight-Ridder's terribly schizophrenic -- they speak of quality and they talk of profits. They're so interested in money, and that's not why I became a newspaperman" (Kurtz, 1995, p. A8). Or, said Robert J. Rosenthal, an associate managing editor at The Inquirer, "Do the people who are making these decisions believe publishing a quality newspaper over time is a good business strategy or do they believe an inferior newspaper will make as much money" (Glaberson, 1995a, p. D9). And, on November 30, executive editor James M. Naughton, who has been with The Inquirer for 18 years, announced he was stepping down on January 2. His reason? "It stopped being as much fun as it ought to be" (Duvoisin, 1995, p. A4). His replacement? Rosenthal.

But newspaper companies clearly believe they have no choice, and the financial problems plaguing them are very real.

Newsprint increases, for instance, have had a devastating impact on costs. Because of a greater overseas demand for newsprint, and because the mills that make newsprint are not expected to increase capacity to any great extent, prices have soared in 1995 (Labaton, 1995). Chart 10 demonstrates that from 1990 to 1994 newsprint prices per metric ton were fairly stable at $685 per metric ton (although it should be noted this is the "list" price and most newspapers, especially the large ones, such as The New York Times, negotiate better prices. For instance, the Times was paying only $469 a metric ton last year, but by spring was paying $675 -- an increase of 44%). On March 1, 1995, however, the list went up 3% to $705 per metric ton and it has been increasing steadily since then.

Chart 11 shows that efficiencies put in place at American newspapers helped to keep consumption low -- decreasing even from 1987, 1988, and 1989 when there was a slight surge. NAA Chief Economist Miles E. Groves said in the September 1995 Presstime that "prices are just approaching levels that mills garnered before the recession. To put this in perspective, prices last peaked in 1988 at about $750 (per metric ton) in 1995 dollars, which may be surpassed later this year. In past cycles, newsprint prices were primarily driven by U.S. demand. This is not true anymore.

(Chart 10)

Newsprint Prices Per Metric Ton (1)

1970	$179
1975	$287
1980	$440
1985	$535
1986	$570
1987	$610
1988	$650
1989	$650
1990	$685
1991	$685
1992	$685
1993	$685
1994	$685
1995	$705

(1)Prices cited in effect at end of year, converted to 30-pound basis weight.

Source: Newspaper Association of America.

"U.S. newsprint consumption is down in the first six months of 1995 by 2- to 4-percent, but with tight international markets, a weak dollar, hiked costs for virgin and recycled fiber, and no significant capacity expansion, prices will remain at historic levels through 1996. If the economy dips in 1997, prices will begin to recede"

(McNeece, 1995, p. 34).

Newsprint is the second-largest expense of newspapers, after salaries, accounting for 20% or more of a newspaper's costs (Labaton, 1995). The rise of newsprint prices has been cited as a reason for the closing of The Houston Post and the consolidations at the Times Mirror Co., as well as the merger of The Milwaukee Journal and The Sentinel. Three dozen companies produce most of the newsprint consumed in the United States. Newsprint is sold by the metric ton, or 2,204 pounds, and large newspapers use hundreds of thousands of metric tons of newsprint annually. For instance, it takes roughly 300,000 metric tons of newsprint to produce The New York Times every year (Labaton, 1995).

(Chart 11)

Growth Rate of Newsprint Consumption and Real GDP

Year	Newsprint Consumption (1) (millions of metric tons)	Real Gross Domestic Product (billions)
1970	8,271	$2,873.9
1980	10,133	$3,776.3
1985	11,571	$4,279.8
1990	12,198	$4,897.3
1991	11,380	$4,861.4
1992	11,622	$4,986.3
1993	11,642 (2)	$5,136.0
1994 (3)	11,803	$5,342.4

(1) 30-pound uniform basis
(2) Revised data
(3) Please note that CPPA no longer produces estimates of total U.S. consumption. This series has been replaced by U.S. demand (apparent consumption).
Sources: Canadian Pulp and Paper Association and U.S. Department of Commerce

As noted above, as newspapers attempt to trim newsprint consumption they try to trim waste, and that means printing fewer papers for single-copy sales. The result has been a decrease in circulation, which means a decrease in a small amount of revenue, which has forced some newspapers to raise rates, which has led to another loss of circulation.

The Detroit strike is also having a tremendous effect on the top two largest newspaper chains. Even if the companies win and earn all the concessions they want, such as reducing work crews, it is anticipated that Gannett and Knight-Ridder will lose $100 million in pretax losses (Glaberson, 1995b). It is theorized that the newspaper giants are waging such a strident battle to show their other newspapers that strikes will not be tolerated and that cuts will be made. Indeed, the two Philadelphia newspapers negotiated their deals with corporate headquarters with the backdrop of the Detroit strike. "This is probably the last big urban newspaper strike," said John Morton of Lynch, Jones & Ryan, a newspaper industry analyst (p. 39).

The Future of Newspaper Companies

Billion-dollar companies are now facing the prospect of charting the course for their newspapers, and they risk losing it all if they make the wrong decisions. Will newspapers survive as ink smeared on dead trees, or will they exist only in some electronic form, such as a flat tablet, or on-line? Will most newspapers, with such notable exceptions as the Wall Street Journal, continue to provide a sampling of local, state, and national news, or will they be forced to tailor their product, or perhaps just the distribution of the product? And who will pay for newspapers in whatever form with whatever content they contain? Can advertisers continue to provide 75% of revenue, or will readers need to carry more of the burden?

Newspapers in the future face many uncertainties, but three main areas loom as the largest concerns at present -- form, content, and financial support. This section of the paper will examine the future of newspapers in these areas, including what today's papers have done to prepare, as well as what experts predict newspapers will need to do to stay on the cutting edge. It will also examine the convergence of the new electronic media with traditional newspapers in creating an entirely new product.

Form -- Ink Smeared on Dead Trees or Something Else?

In 1994, the ABC surveyed 2,000 adults about their interest in, and understanding of, the "information superhighway." Slightly more than half had never heard of it and less than 30% of respondents said they had home computers. Almost 75% of those without home computers doubted they would ever get one. However, "Had you commissioned a similar survey in 1945, people would have said, 'I don't know what a television is, and I don't intend to have one in my home,'" said David M. Cole, editor of The Cole Papers newsletter on technology, journalism, and publishing (Jones, 1995, p.S3).

Because technology isn't moving quite as fast as many people may believe, as witnessed by the ABC survey, it appears that newspapers in their present form -- ink smeared on dead trees -- will survive at least until the beginning of the next century. Some believe that newspapers in their present form will always be around. Mark H. Willes, the new chief executive officer of the Times Mirror Co., said that "one of the great strengths of a broadsheet over various forms of electronic delivery is the happy discoveries the reader makes gliding from page to page. Such happenstance, plus the importance of the information to readers, are behind the emotional links that develop between readers and the paper" (Sterngold, 1995, p. 16). There's more.

Without the traditional newspaper "you don't get the serendipity, the emotional tie. It just becomes another news service," according to Willes.

Although those who have surfed the Internet spending hours in front of a computer gliding from home page to home page with hypertext, making all sorts of exciting, unexpected discoveries as they zip along might disagree, CEO Willes has the resources to play out his scenario.

The Times Mirror Co., under Willes, decided in mid-July, two days after closing New York Newsday, to return to its roots. A press release on July 19 stated that the company "outlined today a series of current developments to refocus resources on its core newspaper, professional information, and magazine businesses and to improve its financial performance." As an indication of how serious Times Mirror is about retrenching from electronic media it closed the consumer multimedia group, Times Mirror Multimedia, and has decided to review its cable television programming business. Perhaps most telling, it eliminated its office of strategic planning

But Willes is not alone in his thinking that traditional newspapers aren't going to crumble up and blow away anytime soon. Kenneth J. Berents, a Wall Street analyst and former journalist, scoffs at the notion that newspapers will someday only be available on-line. "Online services may be fun to visit, but most serious readers wouldn't want to live there. The electronic interface does not satisfy the desire for daily insights into the human soul. . . . Reading habits will not change easily, and the computer industry realizes that it had better adapt to them. Today's online information often is raw, poorly written and edited, and otherwise cannot match a newspaper's composite of features, pleasing layouts and colorful graphics. As for sheer data, Wall Streeters and other business people may demand a continuous supply of computer-driven, often mission-critical bytes, but the average consumer does not" (Berents, 1995, p. S9).

Gannett Co. has also recently thrown its hat back into the traditional newspaper ring. The country's largest newspaper chain decided recently to stick to its traditional moneymakers of newspapers, radio stations, and televisions -- but especially newspapers. This past summer it made its biggest acquisition in history -- buying a company called Multimedia, Inc. for $1.7 billion. The purchase gave Gannett 11 new newspapers, for a total of 93. Gannett's total circulation now reaches 6.6 million, more than twice its nearest competitor, Knight-Ridder. Newspapers will make up an estimated 71% of Gannett profits and 74% of revenue. In addition, Multimedia provided Gannett with five network-affiliated TV stations, making it the eighth-largest broadcast-group owner.

"We aren't complicated people. We like newspapers and TV stations. If you run them well, they can do very well. . . . I haven't seen anything that can do better," John Curley, Gannett's chief executive officer, told the Wall Street Journal this fall (Reilly, 1995, p. B1).

In addition, Knight-Ridder made another commitment to newspapers when it purchased Lesher Communications, Inc. for $360 million last summer. The acquisition gives the chain four newspapers in the Contra Costa and Alameda counties of the San Francisco Bay area. They have a combined circulation of more than 190,000 daily and 206,000 Sunday.

But Times Mirror and Gannett are not typical of newspaper companies today.

Over at Thomson Newspapers, the difference is 180 degrees. In mid-November the company announced it was selling about 25% of its newspapers to put greater emphasis on electronic publishing in such niche areas as law, medicine, health, accounting, and financial services, which accounted for nearly half of its $7 billion

1994 revenue (De Santis, 1995). The result will be about 140 remaining newspapers.

Thomson plans to make a solid entrance into the field by spending $400 million to $500 million a year for the next several years. At present, it owns 63,000 specialty and electronic-publishing business products, such as Jane's Fighting Ships, Physicians' Desk Reference, and First Call, which surveys market analysts. The company isn't abandoning newspapers, according to its chairman, Kenneth R. Thomson, but newspaper earnings in that field are down 32% in five years -- this in a company known for routinely making 20% or more profit a year.

The New York Times Co., which derives 90% of its profits from print properties, has decided to move headfirst into the electronic businesses. "Over the next several years we intend to expand our portfolio so that approximately 75% of our profits come from print and 25% from electronics. While we are increasing our research and development spending on emerging electronic media such as CD-ROM, on-line and multimedia products, the bulk of our future investment spending will focus on more traditional electronic media such as television" (Annual Report, 1994, p. 6).

Other chains have tentatively entered the high technology/new media field with such products as:

-- The New Century Network, a joint venture of 9 of the 15 biggest newspaper companies (Advance, Cox Newspapers, Inc., Gannett Co., Hearst Newspapers, Knight-Ridder, The New York Times Co., Times Mirror Co., Tribune Co., and Washington Post Co.) that is attempting to provide assistance for newspapers entering the Internet (Cole & Feola, 1995).

-- Netscape Communications Corp., the maker of the popular World Wide Web browser, announced in early April that Hearst, Knight-Ridder, and Times Mirror and software maker Adobe Systems, Inc. and TeleCommunications, Inc., were purchasing an 11% interest in the company (Cole & Feola, 1995).

-- Landmark Communications, Inc., owner of the Weather Channel, the Norfolk Virginia-Pilot, and other newspapers and media outlets, agreed to a joint venture with Knight-Ridder to expand InfiNet, an Internet provider in 13 markets nationwide, that plans to be in 100 markets within the next two years (Cole & Feola, 1995).

-- The Massachusetts Institute of Technology's New Media Lab, which signed an agreement with a group of newspaper companies that each agreed to provide $100,000 a year for five years to support the lab's "News in the Future" project. Companies contributing include Gannet, Hearst, Knight-Ridder, New York Times, Pulitzer Publishing Corp., Times Mirror, and Tribune (Cole & Feola, 1995).

-- The Tribune Co. is an equity investor in American Online and has joined with that company to create Chicago Online and the Orlando Sentinel Online. Also the company provides content to the Time Warner Full Service Network interactive television project in Orlando.

And there are many more. But just as newspaper companies seem to be eager to invest in electronic media, there is something of a scattershot approach to it, as noted by the companies above that seemed to have a finger in every pie. This approach was commented on by Uzal H. Martz, Jr., publisher of the Pottsville Republican and this year's president of the NAA: "The whole question of where do we go from here is fraught with technology, changing patterns, and new players. There are two areas of focus: Content issues and conduit issues. Back in the old days these were fairly well separated. Certainly now with the Internet, audiotext, and other new media products there is a blurring distinction between the two. The New Century Network is an attempt to make the conduit side of a seamless pathway" (Cole & Feola, 1995, p. 32).

Martz' comment points up the problem of convergence: because so much is happening so quickly newspaper companies appear to be going in a thousand different directions at once. As Martz notes, newspapers used to own a press, which they used to print up information their employees had researched. Today, content is being sold to other providers, such as cable companies, while another part of the company is providing the conduit for content provided by someone else, such as television stations.

Even as newspaper companies pour money from good newspapers into questionable electronic media ventures, there is much concern. Some are worried that the Internet will turn out to be the CB radios of the 1970s -- hot and faddish and then completely ignored. "While everyone was afraid they were betting tons of money -- and maybe their careers on the CB radio of the '90s, no one was willing to bet their franchise on it. Better, they said, to lose some money on a wild cyber chase than to lose the franchise to a start up -- or to (Bill) Gates" (Cole & Feola, 1995, p. 33).

Form, then, of the future newspaper is not a subject that has much widespread agreement among the players in the field, or the experts. But many people agree that content changes are coming, whether the newspaper stays the same or moves into an electronic era.

Content -- More of the Same Old Stuff, or Niche Information?

In Blacksburg, Va., a rural college town nestled in the Blue Ridge Mountains of southwestern Virginia and home to Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, some believe they have seen the future of newspapers. They are online and providing niche coverage about local communities that is not available from any other source. In 1991, Bell Atlantic invested $7 million in an electronic infrastructure making the town the most extensive online community in the world -- an Electronic Village. The entire community -- businesses, governments, schools, and homes -- was approached to go online and 12,000 of its 36,000 citizens, and 100 companies took the challenge. If this little town, called sleepy by many, is any indication, newspapers online clearly have a future:

> So far, much of Blacksburg's electronic experiment augurs well for newspaper publishers. When given cheap access and a few reasons to connect, the Village suggests that the Internet can draw a diverse audience. Its 85-15 percent ratio of college to noncollege users closely mirrors the town's population, whose comfortable per capita income exceeds $30,500. (Toner, 1995, p. 32)

So far, when users tap into the Internet's global resources, they always come back for local news and information -- the daily newspapers' bread and butter. Also, Bell Atlantic officials have gone to newspaper executives and other information providers about creating content for such services.

"The information is what makes the network valuable. Newspapers are in the information business . . . so it seems there could be a real marriage to change the way information is presented," said John W. Knapp, Jr., Bell Atlantic's director of partnership initiatives (Toner, 1995, p. 32).

What Knapp and others are touting is the idea of niche publishing -- providing information in some form that no one else offers. If CNN can give the latest news from Bosnia, local newspapers will need to concentrate their resources on towns and villages that no one else covers.

For two years, employees of the Orange County Register have fanned out across the region they cover to try to determine what news people want to read. The results showed that people want niche coverage -- and not just editorial but advertising as well. "People look to their local newspaper for specifics on advertised product features, availability and price" (Redfern, 1995, p. 25). Others surveyed said they wanted to choose a customized paper, or have the ability to contact the paper and get information they wanted faxed to them.

One way to provide niche information is to tailor the distribution process. To do this, many newspapers are examining database marketing, according to a recent survey by Northwestern University's Newspaper Management Center. Database marketing provides target circulation and advertising to readers -- such as providing an extra sports section to the homes where sports is the major interest. Tom Happ, production administrator of The Gazette, a 70,893 circulation morning paper in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, predicted that the "tailored" newspaper will become a reality in 10 years. His newspaper already offers 52 zones that give advertisers more than 100 different combinations. Such database marketing, however, requires extensive new technology, such as single-width presses, that can be brought up and shut down more quickly than those that are double-wide, as well as inserters, stackers, and tiers.

However, larger newspapers might not be able to offer tailored newspapers so easily or cost effectively. Elizabeth St. J. Loker, vice president of systems and engineering at The Washington Post, said that an 810,675 circulation newspaper faces a daunting task for targeting specific readers for specific advertisers. Indeed, The Wichita Eagle, with one-eighth the subscription, scrapped plans for tailored editions when it found out the cost to set it up would unlikely not yield a significant return.

Dow Jones may provide an example of a newspaper company that has not only survived but flourished with a combination of niche information -- the Wall Street Journal and Barron's -- and general information, its small community newspapers. In addition, Dow Jones has been a leader in providing its business information in forms other than ink on paper. It has been building a world-wide business television network in which it offers the content and the conduit. Just this summer it bought WNYC-TV from the city of New York for $207 million and renamed in WBIS+. It will feature daytime business and financial news programming for Dow Jones and an evening lineup of sports programming from Madison Square Garden and other venues. Dow Jones also offers several online business information programs to subscribers, such as Dow Vision, a customized information service that delivers real-time business news and information to companies' internal computer networks. This service and others, including Dow Jones New/Retrieval and Telerate, saw revenues rise 20% last year, proving that people are willing to pay for specialty information. As noted above, nearly half of the company's revenues come from its business information systems.

Subsidies -- Who Will Pay for Newspapers in the Future?

Who will pay for this information is the most important question newspaper companies are asking themselves today. Although Dow Jones has found a winning formula, for now, few companies have been able to generate much revenue from putting their papers online, or offering a few special services. But without financial subsidy -- most likely some form of advertising -- newspapers will crumble up and blow away, no matter what form they take or what content they contain. Eric S. Philo, vice president of Goldman Sachs & Co., in New York City, sees putting newspapers online more as a way "to enhance and protect their franchises" (Jones, 1995, p. S6). Many experts, such as James N. Longson, executive vice president and general manager of Compton's New Media in Carlsbad, Calif., say that readers won't pay for electronic information. Instead, Cole and others predict that in 10 years, printed newspapers will generate only about half the industry's revenue, down from about 98% today. The rest will come from online services, fax-on-demand, audiotext, CD-ROMS, and personal digital assistants. For example, although The Wichita Eagle dropped plans for tailored editors it now offers niche products, books, directories, and other specialty publications that will be produced by an independent editorial staff.

Also, some newspapers are making money by offering Internet access, or, some, such as The News and Observer in Raleigh, N.C., provide free access to area schools as a way to broaden its online subscription base. Making money from Internet access probably will not be a long-term proposition, however, as regional Bells or cable companies bring fiber optics into every home.

Advertisers now supply about 75% of the revenues of newspapers, with sales of newspapers themselves generating about 25%. Nancy Hicks Maynard, former deputy publisher of the Oakland Tribune, writing in the September 1995 Quill, sees a problem when newspapers go online:

> Newspapers serve two masters. They create a market for sellers on the newspaper pages, delivering readers as potential customers. Increasingly, we are seeing the collapsing of the triangle into a straight line between supplier and consumer. We know the advertising subsidy of news is undergoing serious erosion as ad dollars are shifting to direct marketing. Manufacturers are buying product promotion at the point of sale. Information technology is allowing sellers to use more efficient distribution channels in pursuit of customers. It is this information technology that produced the Wal-Marts of retailing. Bar coding and computers allow for centralized inventory control that eliminates layers of distribution. That, in turn, reduces the cost of taking goods to the market. With less investment sunk in inventory, the need for advertising to move products goes down. In its most optimistic view of the future, the Newspaper Association of America, the newspaper trade association, could come up with no scenario that preserves the advertising and reader profits the industry experiences

> today. The industry's "official future" finds erosion inevitable. (Maynard, 1995, p. 25)

Maynard added that general news is omnipresent and has become a commodity that doesn't command high commercial value -- or advertising rates. But speciality news, such as television sports, does. She is a firm believer that niche news and entertainment might be important enough to readers or viewers that they are willing to pay for it. She noted that people are willing to pay for specialized sports information on cable and pay-per view channels, and free network television loses its revenue. "The migration is leaving established subsidized information providers with declining brand power in the marketplace. This is particularly dangerous for newspapers because their content is neither comprehensive nor complete. . . . For publishing companies, producing 'information,' as opposed to producing newspapers, will require different approaches to product development, capital allocation and marketing. Some of these functions will be familiar, but others are as yet unknown" (Maynard, 1995, p. 25).

Hillary Schneider, vice president and director of new business development for The Baltimore Sun, said that newspapers online can attract paying advertisers but "the challenge for newspapers is to find ways to create essential services unique to the medium that leverage off existing, core capabilities. The key words there are 'essential services,'" she said (Schneider, 1995, Online). Newspapers will need to tie into an advertiser's felt needs, combining essential news and information services with a marketer's set of objectives in a unique medium. Newspapers will need to drive traffic, because if advertisers can go online and drive sufficient traffic without newspapers, then newspapers will be left behind. The way to drive traffic, she said, is to provide a level of content that is "a unique combination of environment, community relations, names, that help them build that traffic and sales."

However, for advertising to play a continuing role in the publishing business on the Internet, Black of the NAA said it must be measurable in a way that is credible. The newspaper industry is trying to lead efforts to "make Internet advertising as common as traditional mainstream media," (Black, 1995b, Online).

Just as in the debate over form and content, the future of who pays for the news is unclear. Some see advertising as continuing to pay a large majority, some see the readers as willing to subsidize niche news to a large extent. And some see the news as peripheral -- the real money will come from other areas, such as Dow Jones has done providing specialized services that help pay the cost of acquiring the knowledge sent out in both general formats and highly individualized ones.

Conclusion

Newspaper companies anxious to stay on the cutting edge of news content, form, and finances need to invest in all the available markets, or risk missing the one or two, or even more, that take off. But investing in such markets is expensive. The money must come from somewhere in the company and the most likely area is the biggest profit-maker -- the newspapers. As Charles T. Brumback wrote in the Tribune Co.'s annual report on Feb. 24, 1995: "We are well positioned to be a strong competitor in the evolving markets for information and entertainment. We have strong cash flow and the financial capability to expand our asset base with faster-growing business and increased profits from our traditional operations" (p. 2). The New York Times Co. intends to enter into its new ventures the same way "It is our intention to finance much of this shift from internally generated cash while at the same time preserving a conservative balance sheet" (Annual Report, 1995, p. 6).

Newspaper companies know they have no choice but to take money from the profitable portions of their enterprise -- the newspapers -- to prepare for the future. Although some may worry they are betting big dollars on the CB radio of the future, they also know they very could be investing in the television of the 21st century. Some people, such as Willes and Curley, are willing to risk losing competitive advantage to other newspaper companies by betting that electronic media is no television, but the stakes are too high for most to allow this field to be ignored. Better to hedge bets that don't pay off than to lose it all by standing on the sidelines, doing nothing.

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